JOURNAL OF EUGÉNIE DE GUÉRIN

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EDITED

BY G. S. TREBUTIEN

IN TWO VOLUMES

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EUGÉNIE DE GUÉRIN.

I.

To my beloved Brother Maurice.

Je me dépose dans votre âme.
(*Hildegarde to St. Bernard.*)
Nov. 15, 1834.

SINCE then you wish it, my dear Maurice, I am going to continue the little Journal you so much like.[1] But as I have no paper at hand, I shall make use of a stitched copy-book, intended for poetry, of which I only remove the title ;[2] the rest, thread and leaves, are all left as they were ; and bulky though it be, you shall have it by the first opportunity.

[1] We learn from the opening of the next book that this present Journal was the second; the first has not been found.

[2] The half-effaced word *Poems* is still to be deciphered at the head of the page.

I date from the 15th of November, exactly eight days since your last letter came. Just at this present hour I was carrying it in my bag from Cahuzac hither, together with an announcement of a death, that of M. d'Huteau, which his family wished us to be informed of. How often joy and sorrow arrive hand in hand!

Thy letter gave me great delight, but this death saddened us, made us regret a worthy and amiable man who had at all times shown himself our friend. The whole of Gaillac mourned him, great and small. Poor women kept saying, while on their way to his death-bed, "Such a one as he should never have died," and they wept while praying for his peaceful end. This it is that renders one hopeful about his soul: virtues that make us loved by men must make us loved of God. Monsieur the Curé saw him every day, and doubtless he will have done more than merely see him. It is from *the Illustrious*[1] that we have heard these tidings, with others current in the Gaillac circle, and I for my part by way of amusement read them and think of her.

17*th*. — Three letters since yesterday, three very great pleasures, for I am so fond of letters

[1] This other sister was sometimes called by her family *Mimi*, *Mimin*, or Mary.

and of those who have written them to me: Louise, Mimi, and Félicité. That dear Mimi says such sweet charming things about our separation, her return, her weariness; for she gets weary of being far from me, as I of being without her. Each moment I see and feel that I want her, at night more especially, when I am so accustomed to hear her breathe close to my ear. That slight sound sets me to sleep; and not to hear it inspires me with melancholy reflections. I think of death, which also silences everything around us, which also will be an absence. These night thoughts depend somewhat on those I have had during the day. Nothing gets talked of but sickness and death; the Andillac bell has done nothing but toll these last days. It is typhus fever that is now raging, as it does every year. We are all lamenting a young woman of your age, the prettiest and most respectable in the parish, carried off in a few days! She leaves a young infant that she was still nursing. Poor little thing! the mother was Marianne de Gaillard. Last Sunday I went to bid farewell to a dying girl of eighteen. She knew me, poor young creature, spoke just a word and fell back to her praying. I wished to say something to her, but I did not know what to say; the dying speak better than we.

They buried her on the Monday. How many reflections these new graves suggest! Oh my God, how quickly we go out of this world! At night when I am alone, all these dead faces come before me. I am not afraid, but all my thoughts put on mourning, and the world appears to me sad as a tomb; and yet I told you that those letters gave me pleasure. Oh, yes, it is very true, in the midst of this mortality my heart is not dumb, and, indeed, only feels the more keenly what brings it life. Accordingly your letter gave me a flash of joy, or rather of true happiness, by all the good news of which it is full. At length your future begins to dawn; I see before you a profession, a social position, some certainty as to material existence. God be praised! this is the thing in the world that I most desired for thee and for me too; for my future is linked with thine, they are brothers. I have had beautiful dreams on this head, and may perhaps tell them thee. But for the present good-bye; I must write to Mimi.

18*th*. — I am furious with the grey cat. The wicked creature has just robbed me of a young pigeon that I was warming by the fire. The poor little thing was beginning to revive. I had meant to tame it; it would have got fond of me; and now all this ends in its getting crunched up

by a cat! What disappointments there are in life! This event, and indeed all those of the day, have occurred in the kitchen; it is there that I have spent the whole morning and part of the evening since I have been without Mimi. It is necessary to overlook the cook. Papa too comes down sometimes, and I read to him beside the stove or in the chimney corner, out of the 'Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church.' This great book struck Peterkin with amazement, *Qué de monts aqui dedins!*[1] That child is quite a character; one evening he asked me if the soul was immortal, and afterwards what a philosopher meant. You see we had got upon lofty questions. When I replied that it was some one who was wise and learned: "Then, Mademoiselle, you are a philosopher!" This was said with a simplicity and sincerity that might have flattered Socrates, but which made me laugh so much that my solemn catechiser took himself off for the evening. This child left us one of these last days to his great regret; his term was up on the festival of St. Brice, and there he is now hunting for truffles with his little pig. If he comes this way I shall go and find

[1] In the patois of the district, "How many words inside it!"

him out, to ask if he still thinks I look like a philosopher.

With whom do you suppose I was spending this morning by the kitchen fire? With Plato: I did not dare to say so, but he chanced to come under my eyes, and I determined to make his acquaintance. I am only at the first pages as yet. He seems to me most admirable, this Plato; but one of his notions strikes me as singular, that of ranking health before beauty in the catalogue of God's gifts? If he had consulted a woman, Plato would not have written thus: you feel sure of that, don't you? So do I; and yet, remembering that I am a *philosopher*, I rather incline to his opinion. When one is in bed and really ill, one would gladly sacrifice one's complexion or one's bright eyes to regain health and enjoy the sunshine. And besides, a small degree of piety in the heart, a little love of God, is enough to make one speedily renounce such idolatries; for a pretty woman adores herself. When I was a child I thought nothing equal to beauty, because, I said to myself, it would have made Mamma love me better. Thank God this childishness has passed away, and the beauty of the soul is the only one I covet. Perhaps even in this I am still childish as of yore: I should like to resemble the

angels, — this may displease God ; the motive is still the same, to be loved better by Him. How many things occur to me, only I must leave thee ! I have got to say my rosary ; night is at hand, and I like to end the day in prayer.

20*th*. — I delight in snow ; there is something heavenly about this white expanse. Mud, bare earth, displeases and depresses me ; to-day I see nothing but the tracks on the road, and the foot-prints of little birds. However lightly they settle, they leave their small traces, which make all sorts of patterns in the snow. It is pretty to watch those tiny red feet, like coral pencils drawing themselves. Thus winter too has its charms and prettinesses. *Everywhere God sheds grace and beauty*. I must go now and see what there is of pleasant to be found by the kitchen fire, — sparks at all events. This is a mere " good-morning " that I say to the snow and to thee on jumping out of bed.

I had to put an extra dish on the table for Sauveur Roquier, who had come to see us ; it was a ham cured with sugar, which made the poor fellow lick his lips. Good things do not often fall to his share ; that was why I determined to give him a treat. It is, as I think, the neglected to whom we should show these attentions ; humanity and charity teach us this. The

prosperous can do very well without them, and yet it is only they who meet with them in the world; so made up of contradictions are we.

No reading to-day; I was making up a head-dress for the little one, and that took all my time. But whether we work with our head or our fingers, it is all one in the eyes of God, who keeps account of everything that is undertaken in His name. I therefore hope that my head-dress may be accepted as a work of charity. I made a present of my time, of a little portion of my skin worn away by the needle, and of thousands of interesting lines that I might else have read. Papa brought me from Clairac the day before yesterday 'Ivanhoe' and the 'Life and Times of Louis XIV.' There are provisions for some of the long winter evenings! It is I who am the great reader, but only by fits and starts; sometimes it 's a key that I am asked for, — a thousand things are wanted, — often I myself in person, — and the book gets shut for the moment. Oh, Mimin! when will you return to help the poor housekeeper, who misses you at every moment? Did I tell thee that yesterday I got tidings of her at the C . . . fair to which I had gone? How many yawns, to be sure, I left behind on that luckless balcony! At last Mimi's letter was brought me just as if to be an

antidote to weariness, and it was the only pleasant thing I saw at C . . .

I put down nothing here yesterday; better blank spaces than mere nullities, and they were all I should have had to say. I was tired and sleepy. Things are much better to-day; I have seen the snow come and go away again. While I was preparing my dinner a bright sun broke out; good-bye to the snow; now blackness and ugliness are reappearing. What shall I see to-morrow morning? Who knows? The face of the world changes so suddenly.

I have just come away in good spirits from the kitchen, where I remained longer than usual this evening to try and determine Paul, one of our servants, to go to confession at Christmas. He has promised me that he would. He is a good youth, and he will do it. God be praised! my evening has not been lost. What joy could I but thus win every day some soul to God! Good Sir Walter has been neglected to-night; but what amount of reading would have been of the same value to me as this promise of Paul's! It is nine o'clock; I am going to sleep.

21*st.* — This day began radiantly: a summer sun, a soft air that invited one to take a walk. Everything urged me to do so, but I only took two steps beyond the door, and stopped short

at the sheep-stable to look at a white lamb that had just been born. I delight in seeing these tiny animals, which make us thank God for surrounding us with so many gentle creatures. When Peterkin came, I gave him breakfast and chatted a while with him, without getting the least tired of the conversation. How many parties there are of which one cannot say as much! The wind blows: all our doors and windows groan! It is somewhat melancholy at this present time in my solitude, the whole house being asleep: they rose early to bake. I, too, was very busy the whole morning with the two dinners; after that came rest. I wrote to Antoinette. All this is very insignificant: blank paper would be as good as what I am writing; but, were it only a drop of ink from here, you would take pleasure in looking at it; that is why I am turning it into words. I don't know why, but last night I saw nothing but a procession of coffins. To-night I should like less gloomy dreams, and am going to pray God to send them me.

24*th*. — Three days blank, my dear friend. This is very long for me who so little approve empty space; but I have not had time to sit down. I have only passed through my little room since Saturday. This is the first time I

have stopped in it, and I do so to write a very long letter to Mimi and two words here. Perhaps this evening I may add something, should it occur. For the moment all is calm, within and without, soul and house : a happy condition, but giving me little to say, like peaceful reigns to the historian. This day began with a letter from Paul. He invites me to Alby. I cannot promise him this ; I should have to leave home for that, and I am becoming sedentary. Very willingly would I take the vow of seclusion here at Cayla. No place in the world pleases me so much as home. Oh, the deliciousness of *home!* How I pity thee, poor exile, to be so far away from it ; to see thy own people only in thought ; not to be able to say to us either " Good-morning " or " Good-evening ; " to live a stranger without any home of thy own in the world, — having father, brother, and sisters, in one place ! All this is sad, and yet I may not wish thee anything else. We cannot have thee, but I hope to see thee again, and this consoles me. I am constantly thinking of thy arrival, and foreseeing how happy we shall be.

While I was standing near the mill a poor little girl from Andillac brought me a letter from Mimi. " Many thanks, child ! here is a penny

for you." She takes the penny, and does not go. "What more do you want?" "Why, the letter to be sure." "The letter is for me." "Yes, but you must give it back to me; and see" (putting her finger on the seal), "you have gone and torn it!" and she stared quite aghast at seeing me laugh over this catastrophe. At last, finding that I was quite determined not to return her her missive, she bade me *adissias*. Then sitting down upon a rail, I read the prettiest little sister-endearments. There is nothing so bright and clever as Mimin's affectionate heart. She is getting quite tired, wants to see us again. Gaiety gives her little pleasure; we shall have her back on Friday. I am going to write to her by Eran,[1] who is about to visit the Huteaux. I, on my part, find myself alone, solitary, but half-alive; as though, it seems to me, I had only half a soul. Just now it occurs to me that all this is but lost time; that thou wilt find nothing attractive enough in these pages to open them all. What will they contain? Days that resemble each other; some little of a life that gives nothing to tell. Better that I should return to the *estoupas* I was sewing. I leave thee, then, poor pen!

[1] Familiar abbreviation of the name of her brother Erembert.

How beautiful must be the heaven of heavens! This is what I kept thinking during the time I have just been spending in contemplation under the most glorious winter sky. I have a habit of opening my window before going to bed, to see what sort of weather it is, and, if fine, to enjoy it. This night I looked longer than usual, so ravishingly beautiful was it! But for the fear of cold I should be there still. I thought of God, who has made our prison so radiant; I thought of the saints, who have all those beauteous stars beneath their feet; I thought of thee, who wert, perhaps, looking up to them like me. All this might easily have kept me up all night; but, however, one must shut the window upon that grand outer world, and shut one's own eyes under the curtains! Eran brought me two letters from Louise this evening. They are charming: enchanting and full of wit, soul, heart; and all this for me! I don't know why I am not quite transported and intoxicated with friendship. Yet God knows if I love her! There, you have my day to its last hour; nothing remains but my evening prayer and the waiting for sleep. I don't know whether it will come; as yet it is far away. Possibly Mimi may return to-morrow; at this very hour I shall have her. She will be here;

or, rather, our heads will be resting on the same pillow ; she talking to me of Gaillac, I to her of Cayla.

26*th*. — I did not write yesterday ; I did nothing but expect. At last she came in the evening — the dear Mimi ! Now then I am happy ; I begin over and over again the narrative of all I have done, said, and thought since her departure. She tells me a thousand things about our friends, about people in general, everything she has seen ; and all this is so charming to say and hear. *Oh, the happiness of meeting again !* Positively, it would almost be worth while to go away from time to time for this one pleasure of coming back. I made a beginning of a letter to thee yesterday, but I was not in writing mood ; my whole soul kept going to the window. To-day, I return to myself and shall finish my page, but this only after dinner, by way of recreation. First of all, I must tell thee that I have just been enjoying the sun from the hill of Sept-Fonts. This is one of my favourite pleasures, as are all those that come from the sky. But the hill is melancholy now ; it is all one can do to see where the bench once stood. There were some remnants of it, some splinters not long ago ; but how fast even mere débris pass away ! Meanwhile, as I

was thinking, looking, and regretting, I sat me down on a prostrate oak — my bench of to-day. It, at least, will not be carried off by the wind. There I waited for Mimi, who was gone on Pingembert, to take some pomegranate plants to the Vialarette for Marie de Thézac. Why cannot I thus find some one who would take something to thee?

27th. — I close Saint Augustine, my soul full of those soothing words, "Throw yourself into the bosom of God, as upon a bed of rest." What a beautiful idea! and what refreshment we should find in life, if, like the saints, we knew how to rest in God! They go to Him as children to their mother, and on His breast they sleep, pray, weep, abide. God is the home of the saints; but we earthly-minded ones know no other than this earth — this poor earth — dry, black, and mournful, as a dwelling under a curse. Nothing came to-day, not even the sun; this evening only a few crows have flown by. No walk, no going out, except in thought; but my thought does not wander, it soars. This evening our reading will be the report of the famous Carrat case, which occupies the whole country; but I am not fond of such affairs, and criminal celebrity has nothing about it interesting according to me. However, I am going to

give myself up to it. The wretched man has written from his prison to Mademoiselle Vialar, to ask her for an '*Imitation*.' Such an idea in this active spirit might lead us to hope for a conversion; but it is to be feared that it only shows hypocrisy, since he continues to be a wretch, they say. Erembert is gone to Alby to hear the trial, which draws crowds. Whence can we get this curiosity of ours about monsters?

28*th*. — This morning, before daylight, my fingers were in the ashes looking for fire enough to light a candle. I could not find any, and was just going back to bed when a little bit of charcoal that I happened to touch showed a spark, and there was my lamp lit. Dressing got over quickly, prayer said, and we were with Mimi in the Cahuzac road. That unfortunate road, I so long took it alone, and how glad I was to take it with four feet to-day! The weather was not fine, and I could not see the mountain; that dear district I look at so much when it is clear. The chapel was engaged, which was a pleasure to me. I like not to be hurried, and to have time before I enter in there to raise my whole soul before God. This often takes long, because my thoughts find themselves scattered like leaves. At two o'clock I was on my knees, listening to the finest teaching imaginable; and

I came out feeling that I was better. The effect of every burden laid down is to leave us relieved; and when the soul has laid down that of its faults at the feet of God, it feels as though it had wings. I admire the excellency of confession. What ease, what light, what strength I feel conscious of every time that I have said "It is my fault!"

29*th*. — Cloaks, clogs, umbrellas — all the apparatus of winter — followed us this morning to Andillac, where we stayed till evening between the parsonage and the church. This Sunday life, so stirring, so active, how much I like it! We come upon each other in passing, and then chatter while walking on together about the poultry, the flocks, the husband, the children. My great pleasure is to caress these last, and to see them hide themselves, red as fire, in their mother's petticoats. They are afraid of *las doumaiselos*, as of everything unfamiliar. One of these urchins said to his grandmother, who was speaking of coming here, "*Minino*, don't go to that castle; there is a black dungeon there." Why is it that castles have at all times inspired terror? Is it because of the horrors that were committed in them of yore? I think so. Oh! how sweet it is, when the rain is heard pattering, to be by the corner of one's fire,

tongs in one's hand, making sparks! This was my amusement just now. I am very fond of it; sparks are so pretty! they are the flowers of the chimney. Really, there are charming things going on amongst the embers, and when I am not occupied I like to watch the phantasmagoria of the hearth. There are a thousand little fairy shapes coming, going, dilating, changing, disappearing; now angels, now horned demons, children, old women, butterflies, dogs, sparrows. One sees a little of everything in the embers. I remember one face, with an expression of heavenly suffering, which reminded me of a soul in purgatory. I was struck by it, and should like to have had a painter by my side. Never was there a more perfect vision. Remark the logs burning, and thou wilt agree that, unless we are blind, we ought not to find time tedious beside a fire. Listen, above all, to that little whistle which sometimes comes from below the burning half of the wood, like a singing voice. Nothing can be more exquisite or pure; one would say it was some very diminutive spirit of fire that was chanting. There, my friend, are my evenings and their amusements; to which add sleep, which is by no means the least of them.

30*th*. — I have been told a striking story of a sick woman at Andillac. After having swooned

away, and remained, as it were, dead for sixteen hours, this woman suddenly opened her eyes and called out, "Who has brought me back from the other world? I was between heaven and hell; the angels were drawing me one way, the devils the other. Oh God! how I suffered, and how awful is the sight of the abyss!" And, turning round, she began to repeat in a supplicatory voice litanies of the Divine mercy that had never been read anywhere; then took again to speaking of hell that she had seen and been close to, in her swoon. And when she was told that she should not keep thinking of such frightful subjects, "Hell is not for dogs," she said; "I have seen it, I have seen it!" Is not this a dramatic scene? and it is quite true. It was Françoise, the sister of the Curé, who told it to me, and who had herself watched beside the sick woman that very night. The sufferer was none of the most pious before, and now she is full of faith, fervour, and resignation. The Curé is the only physician she wants; she says nothing to the other. May we not believe that God has had a hand in this? Who knows all that a dying soul may see —

> When the next world appears before its gaze,
> Then . . . .

But I won't write poetry.

Listen to a striking miracle that I have just been reading. It is one of Saint Nicaise, who, when evangelising in Gaul, found himself in a country ravaged by an enormous dragon. The saint, taking advantage of this event to make known to the people the power of the God he proclaimed, gave his stole to one of his disciples and sent him to meet the monster, which the disciple bound with this stole, and brought into the presence of the whole people, before whom he burst. I admire the simplicity of the narrative, and the grand prodigy in which I believe. Good-night, with Saint Nicaise!

1st December. — It is with the same ink that I have just written my letter to thee that I go on writing here; the same drop, falling half of it in Paris, half on this page, will jot down for thee all manner of things — here tender words, there scoldings, for I always send thee whatever passes through my mind. I am sorry to have only written thee two or three words. I might have sent thee this, and the idea did occur to me of detaching these few sheets; but suppose they were to be lost in the public houses where Master Delaruc is sure to go and drink! Better keep our chit-chat for a safe opportunity. It will be with the pie, then, that I shall send it, if I can without risk put papers into the case.

2*nd*. — I am vexed with myself for being weak enough to suppose thee indifferent to us and to me. And yet, absurd as this idea is, it occupied and saddened me yesterday the whole day. Accordingly you see how little I said to thee. Sadness makes me dumb ; forgive it me ; I prefer to be silent rather than to complain. It is thy letter to Mimi that has caused it all. I will tell thee why. When you read this, my friend, recollect that it is written on the 1st of December — a day of rain, gloom, and vexation — on which the sun has not shown itself, when I have seen nothing besides crows, and had only a very short letter of yours to read.

3*rd*. — Nothing more than the date to-day.

But no ! I will not be a whole day without saying something to thee, were it only a good-night. It is seven o'clock — Marie is stirring the fire. I hear the brook. This is all I have to particularise just now, together with a beautiful star that I can see from here, rising above Les Mérix. You have not forgotten that hamlet ?

4*th*. — A rare and pleasant visit ; Madame de F—— has just gone away. We could only keep her a few hours, from ten to three. Her husband was with her, and carried her off in spite of our entreaties. The fact is, he him-

self was obliged to return, and he can no more do without his wife than without his eyes. Happy woman! to know how to make herself so indispensable! There she is now on the hill of Bleys — and here I am telling thee that she has been here — a great event at Cayla, a lady's visit, more especially at this season.

I really must write to Gaillac. It is to —— that I shall write, but not as I do to thee or to Louise, at full length, freely, fully; but briefly, as it were, in miniature. It is enough for one who only wants to make himself visible. I keep the large scale for intimates. Two visits, two letters written, and one received; this is a great deal in the course of a Cayla day. The weather too was fine; we went down to the meadow, and enjoyed the sun as we might have done in spring.

5*th*. — Papa set out this morning for Gaillac; here we are sole "châtelaines," Mimi and I, till to-morrow, and absolute mistresses! This regency is not disagreeable, and I rather enjoy it for a day, but not longer. Long reigns are tedious. It is enough for me to rule "Trilby," and to get her to come when I call, or to give her paw when I ask it. Yesterday a sad accident befell "Trilby." As she was tranquilly sleeping under the kitchen chimney, a gourd

that was hanging up to dry fell upon her. The blow bewildered her; the poor pet came running to us as quickly as ever she could, to impart her distress. A caress cured her. Night has come. A knock makes itself heard! Every one runs to the door, crying "Who is there?" It was Jean de Persac, an old tenant, whom I had not seen for a long time. He was heartily welcomed, and set down upon his first entrance to eat and drink; after which we got him to talk of his present locality, and of his wife and children. I am very fond of such conversations and meetings. These faces of the olden time give peculiar pleasure; they seem to restore one's youth. I fancied myself yesterday back to the time when Jean used to take me upon his knee.

6th. — I made Jean promise to call again this evening, so I shall see him once more, and then I mean to give him a letter for Gabrielle; he is one of their farm tenants. *Bri* will not be sorry to get this unexpected "souvenir." I should else have written to her by the post, and thus I save her eight pence, which she will give over and above to her poor people. Therefore this is a good work on my part. Indeed, it has been a day of good actions, this. I am just returned from Cahuzac, as is invariably the case,

wonderfully disposed to do right ; to do wrong on such a day seems to me impossible. And then there comes such a strange calm ! Just observe how tranquil my spirit appears on these occasions. It is so in reality, for I never disguise anything from thee ; but let drop on the paper whatever comes, even tears ! When my diary is prolonged, it is a sign that I am at my best. Great abundance, then, of affection and of things, to tell, — those that go on within the soul. As for external things, very often they are not worth mentioning, unless they go and echo within, like the knocker on a door. Then one speaks of them, however small they be. A bit of news, a gust of wind, a bird, a nothing will sometimes go to my heart, and would afford me subjects for pages. If I were to dwell upon what I am to do to-morrow ! But here prayers are better than words. If I speak to God, He will draw near ; and thou, thou art so far away ! Thou hearest me not, and the time that I devote to thee will not count in heaven. Almost all that we do for the creature is lost, unless love be blended with it. Love is the salt that preserves affections and actions from the corruption of life. Here comes Papa !

7th. — Yesterday the evening was spent in

talking about Gaillac, of these, and those, and a thousand things going on in the little town. I do not care much for news; but news of friends always gives pleasure, and one listens to it with more interest than to news of the world and of tiresome politics. Nothing makes me yawn so soon as a newspaper. It was not so formerly, but tastes change, and the heart detaches itself from something or other every day we live. Time and experience too disabuse; as we advance in life we at length gain the proper position whence to judge of our affections and know them in their true light. I have all mine now present before me. First I see dolls, toys, birds, butterflies, that I loved — sweet and innocent childish affections. Then come reading, conversation, dress in a slight degree, and dreams, beautiful dreams! . . . But I am not going to confess. It is Sunday. I have returned alone from the first mass at Lentin, and I am enjoying in my little room the sweetest calm in the world, in union with God. The happiness of the morning penetrates me, flows into my soul, and transforms me into something that I cannot express. I leave thee. I must be silent.

8*th.* — I never read any book of devotion without finding in it admirable things, and, as

it were, made on purpose for me. Thus, for instance, "They that trust in the Lord shall find their strength renewed day by day. When they think themselves powerless and exhausted, suddenly their wings shall sprout like those of the eagle. They shall run, and not be weary: they shall walk, and not faint. Advance, then, pious soul, advance; and, when you believe yourself at the last gasp, redouble your zeal and courage, for the Lord will sustain you." How often we need this support! Oh, poor weak, wavering, fainting soul! say what would become of thee, without the Divine help? These words are Bossuet's. I have hardly opened any other book to-day. The hours have passed in everything but reading, in matters that are nothing, are nameless, and which yet run away with all one's time. Good-night, my friend!

9th. — I have just been warming myself by every fireside in the village. This is a round that we make with Mimin from time to time, and which is by no means without its attractions. To-day it was a visiting of the sick; accordingly we discussed medicines and infusions. "Take this;" "Do that;" and we are listened to as attentively as any doctor. We prescribed clogs to a little child that had made

itself ill by walking barefoot, and a pillow to its brother, who with a violent headache was lying quite flat; the pillow relieved him, but will not cure him, I think. He seems to be suffering from an affection of the chest, and these poor people in their hovels are like cattle in their stalls; the bad air poisons them. Returning to Cayla, I find myself in a palace compared to their cottages. Thus it is that, having habitually to look beneath me, I always find myself fortunately placed.

10*th*. — Hoar frost, fog, icy prospect; this is all I see to-day. Accordingly I shall not stir out, and am going to curl myself up in the chimney corner with my work and my book; now one, now the other — the alternation amuses me; and yet I should like to read all day long, but I have other things that must be done, and duty goes before pleasure. I call pleasure all reading that is in no way essential to me. There is a flea! — a flea in winter; it is a present from "Trilby." Indeed it seems that in every season insects are devouring us, whether dead or alive; the least numerous of them being those we see; for our teeth, our skin, our whole body, is, they say, full of them! Poor human body! to think of our soul having to dwell in such an abode! No wonder it finds

little pleasure therein, so soon as it takes to reflecting about where it is! Oh, the glorious moment when it issues thence, when it enjoys life — heaven — God — the other world! Its amazement, I think, would resemble that of the chicken coming out of its shell, if only the chick had a soul.

I was talking to you about reading; in the evening it is a 'History of Russia' that we are reading out, and by day I am occupied with the 'Siècle de Louis XIV.' They tell me that this work of Voltaire's is fit to be read, and so it doubtless is; but one often finds the Voltairian spirit in it, every time. for example, that the subject of religion comes up; but this does me no harm. Accordingly I go on, thinking it well written. I have now nothing new to read. The reports of the Carrat case are over, and I do not regret them. These horrors that take place under our eyes are more horrible than any others. The three murderers are sentenced to death, and will be executed at Gaillac. It is true that Carrat thinks of the next world, and reads 'Thomas à Kempis,' and this does not surprise me in a soul now under the scaffold, which had introduced the idea of heaven even into its plans of murder. He never set out on any of his expeditions without providing himself

with a *rosary!* Strange idea! "I went back the night of the crime," said he, "to fetch my rosaries that I had forgotten; and I ran to Courtaud's house." It was there that he assassinated three persons in a most frightful manner, a man and two women; but let us turn away from these horrors. A beautiful slice of mullet is awaiting me on the gridiron. I am going to join it.

11*th.* — Fog again; same sort of weather as yesterday, only my bird is singing, which I know to be an augury of sunshine. I am sure we shall soon see it. It is now only nine o'clock; before twelve it will have made its way through the clouds, and we shall have a bright day, which will rejoice me as well as my bird, for I do not like gloom.

Evening. — I was right in saying that my bird foresaw sunshine. It came, but pale and cold; the fireside was far before it. Accordingly we did not leave it, except, indeed, Papa, who went out to make an offer of marriage in the village. Strange to say, he was refused; but it is out of vexation at not having been able to say *Yes* to some one else, that the fair lady said *No* to-day. You know her; it is the one about your own age, and who was waiting for you as you are aware. But that passed over,

and her recent expectations were fixed on another who equally escaped her. The poor girl, whose heart was in it, is now quite unhappy, and replied to the suit of another wooer that she would not fetter herself. This may be to avoid wearing two chains ; and, if so, she is right. Regret is so heavy ! A poor stranger has passed by ; then a little child. This is all that has shown itself to-day. Is it worth telling of it ?

12th. — I begin by putting down the date, and then we shall see what comes for my daily chronicle. Doubtless not much, unless it be some unexpected occurrence, which I hardly desire ; or unless there be a letter from thee, or from the mountains, which always makes me happy.

Nothing to say, nothing to write, nothing to think ; the cold seals up even the soul. It seems in winter as though one's thoughts no longer circulated, but froze in one's head like icicles. This is what I feel often, feel just now ; but let something pleasant come to me — a letter, a book, a feeling that revives — the thaw sets in at once, and the waters flow.

Two mendicant friars have gone by. These poor perished people looked on me as happy to be by the fireside, and to have something to

give them. Now that you are rich, you must often give alms. I know you like to do so. I remember your telling me that you never met a poor man without giving him a penny if you had one. That penny brought you good luck. Give one sometimes for me. What I give here will not count, because I have nothing exclusively my own; it is the gift of the whole community. I have a share in it, but it is a very small one. Help me. If I were at Paris, I should often put my hand into thy pocket.

The reign of Peter I. has held us fast the whole evening. It is an interesting reign. One likes to see all that can be done by genius and . . .

There it is just as I left it a week ago! I don't know who came to call me off, and since then how many new ideas, how much to say! But everything ought not to get said. Of what use were it? God only can understand all, and console the heart when sad.

Last day of December. — A fortnight has passed without my adding anything here. Do not ask me why? There are times when one does not want to speak, things one does not desire to tell. Christmas is over, beautiful festival, my favourite of all, which brings me as

much joy as to the shepherds of Bethlehem. Truly the whole soul sings aloud at this glad advent of God, which is announced on all sides by carols and the pretty *nadalet*.[1] Now in Paris nothing gives one the idea of its being Christmas. You have not even the midnight mass. We all went to it, with Papa at our head, by an enchantingly fine night. Never was there a more beatiful sky than that midnight one, so that Papa kept putting his head out from his cloak from time to time to look up. The ground was white with hoar frost, but we were not cold; and, besides, the air was warmed before us, as we went, by the bundles of fagots that our servants carried to light us. It was charming, I assure you, and I wished I could have seen you walking along, as we did, towards the church, through roads bordered with little white bushes, that looked in full blossom. The frost makes beautiful flowers. We saw one sprig so pretty that we wanted to make a nosegay of it for the Blessed Sacrament, but it melted in our hands. All flowers are short-lived. I much regretted my bouquet; it was sad to see it melt and shrink drop by drop. I slept at the par-

[1] Name given to a particular way of ringing the bells during the fortnight preceding Christmas Day; which, in the dialect of Languedoc is called *Nadal*.

sonage. The good sister of the Curé kept me there, and prepared me an excellent *réveillon*[1] of hot milk. Papa and Mimi returned to warm themselves at home by the great fire of the *Souc de Nadal*.[2] Since, there has come cold, fog, everything that darkens the sky and the soul. To-day, that the sun shines again, I revive; I expand like the pimpernel, that pretty flower which only opens to the sun.

Here, then, are my last thoughts, for I shall write nothing more this year. In a few hours it will be all over; we shall have begun the new year. Oh, how fast the time flies! Alas! alas! would one not say that I am regretting it? My God, no; I do not regret either time, or what it takes from us. It is not worth while to throw one's affections into the torrent. But the empty, careless days, lost as regards heaven, these are what make one cast a regretful glance on life. Dear brother, where shall I be on this same day, at this same time, same instant, next year? Shall I be here or elsewhere? Here below, or in heaven above? God knows; and here I stand at the gate of the future, resigning myself to whatever may issue thence. To-mor-

[1] Meal taken by Catholics after returning from the midnight mass on Christmas eve.

[2] Yule-log.

row I shall pray that thou mayest be happy; pray for Mimi, for Papa, for all I love. It is the day of gifts: I shall take mine to heaven. It is thence that I derive all my blessings; for, truth to tell, on earth I find but few things to my taste. The longer I live in it the less I enjoy it; and accordingly I see, without any regret, the approach of years, which are so many steps towards the other world. It is neither pain nor sorrow which makes me feel thus; do not suppose it. I should tell thee if it were; it is only the home-sickness which lays hold of every soul that sets itself to thinking of heaven. The hour strikes, the last that I shall hear while writing to thee. I would have it interminable, like all that gives pleasure. How many hours have sounded from that old clock, that dear piece of furniture that has seen so many of us pass, without ever going away; as it were a kind of eternity! I am fond of it, because it has struck all the hours of my life, the fairest ones when I did not listen to them. I can remember that my crib stood at its foot, and I used to amuse myself in watching the hands move. Time amuses us then; I was four years old. They are reading pretty things in the parlour. My lamp is going out; I leave thee. Thus ends my year beside a dying lamp.

3rd January, 1835. — A letter from Brittany reached me this morning, like a sweet New Year's gift. I have spent the whole day in thinking of Madame de La Morvonnais, and in deciphering the handwriting of her husband, which is by no means a plain one. Now, however, I have made it out, and perfectly understand his idea, but I cannot respond to it. The poetess he takes me for is an ideal being, quite apart from the life that I lead. a life of occupation, of housekeeping, which absorbs all my time. How can it possibly be otherwise? I know not; and, moreover, this is my duty, and I will not depart from it. Would to God that my thoughts, my soul, had never winged their way beyond the narrow sphere in which I am forced to live. It is in vain to talk to me thus; I cannot rise above my needle or my distaff without going too far. I feel, I believe this. I shall therefore remain where I am placed, whatever may be said about it. My soul will inhabit high places only in heaven.

5th. — My dear friend, for two days I have said nothing to thee. This may often occur; now for one thing, now for another; but, if words fail, thought is always at work, ever-turning wheel that it is, and turning very fast to-day. I ask myself whence so much move-

ment comes. It amazes me, sometimes even saddens, for I am so fond of repose ; not inaction, but that calm in which a happy soul abides ! Saint Stylites, the saint of to-day, is admirable up there on his column. I look upon him as happy, to have thus made himself a dwelling on high, and not even to touch earth by treading on it. These lives of the saints are wondrous ; charming reading, and full of instruction for a believing soul. I hear a young hen of ours cackling ; I must go and look for her nest.

6th. — A beautiful day, sunshine, *Boubi !* one of thy letters. Hast not thou forgotten this *Boubi !* these wishes of children on Twelfth Night ? I don't very well know what they mean, or why this day should be devoted to wishes for wine, for that is what the children keep crying, while we give them walnuts and apples in return for the good wine they wish us, and they go away quite pleased. It was " La Ratière," thy old friend, who brought us thy letter, not omitting to inquire first if it was from M. Maurice ; and next, how he was, and whether he was still very far off, and all this with a show of interest which pleased one. I do believe that if you had been there she would have found some nuts in her pocket. With us

it was different ; it is only to friends nuts get given. Thy letter charmed me by its cheerful tone ; the fact is, thou art now out of the tempests and shocks that have so long harassed thee. God be praised for this, and may He keep thee at anchor ! I always hoped that some good fortune would befall thee.

17th. — I have just been writing to Félicité. It is always pen or books that I lay hold of on rising ; books to pray, think, reflect over. This would be my occupation all day long if I followed my bent, that something in me which impels me to meditation, to internal contemplation. I am fond of dwelling upon my thoughts, of bending, as it were, over each one of them, to inhale and enjoy them before they evaporate. This taste came to me early. When I was quite a child I used to indulge in little soliloquies, which would be full of charm could I recover them ; but 't is in vain to go and look after childish things : —

"Go ask for water from the fount run dry."

The little Morvonnais sends me a kiss, her mother tells me. What shall I give her in return for a thing so sweet, so pure, as her childish kiss ? It seems as though a lily had touched my cheek : —

Fain would I run, dear child, when thou dost call ;
  Saying, " I love thee, I would thee caress ; "
Spreading, like two white wings, thine arms so small,
  To fold me in a soft embrace.

Oft my white lambs caress me in their play,
  My dove oft pecks my lips with playful beak ;
But when o'er me a child's warm kisses stray,
  'T is as a lily bent to touch my cheek

Fragrant my face with innocence like thine.
  My spirit made at length all pure and mild,
Ineffable delight and joy divine !
  Would that I had thy kisses, blue-eyed child !

8th. — It is not worth while to say anything about to-day ; nothing has come, nothing has stirred, nothing has got done in our solitude. My little bird alone has kept jumping up and down in its cage while warbling to the sun. I often looked at it, having nothing prettier to see in my room. I have not left it ; all my time has been spent in sewing a little, in reading, and then reflecting. What a beautiful thing thought is, and what pleasure it gives when it lifts itself on high ! 'T is its natural direction, which it resumes as soon as it is freed from terrestrial objects. There is a mysterious attraction between us and heaven. God wants us, and we want God. I don't know what bird this is that keeps flying about my head. I hear

it almost without seeing it; it is dark. It is not the season of night birds. This is enough to disturb me, and break the thread I was winding. How little suffices! This small apparition makes me leave my room, not, though, from fright. I am going to tell Mimi to come and see this bird.

9th. — What, I wonder, was that bird of yesterday evening? It disappeared like a vision the moment that I brought the candle, and I got well laughed at by them all. They said it was my fancy; that I had seen it in my head. But, for all that, it was most decidedly with my eyes that I saw it. I watched it for more than five minutes, and it was the noise that it made in flying that first made me notice it.

1st March. — It is a long time now that my journal has been neglected. I came upon it in opening my desk, and the idea of leaving a word or two in it recurred to me. Shall I tell thee why I gave it up? It was because I looked upon the time spent in writing as wasted. We owe an account of our moments to God; and is it not spending them ill to trace down here days that go by? and yet I find a charm in it, and afterwards like to look over the path of my life through my solitude. On reopening this book, and reading some pages of it,

it occurred to me that in twenty years, if I lived as long, it would be an exquisite pleasure to me to re-read it, to find myself once more here, as in a mirror that should retain my youthful features. I am not young, however; but at fifty I shall consider that I was young now. Therefore I will give myself this pleasure; if a scruple returns, I will put the book by at once. But the good God may, perhaps, be less strict than my conscience, and forgive me this small pastime. To-morrow, then, I will resume my journal. I must record my happiness of yesterday, — a very sweet, very pure happiness, a kiss from a poor creature to whom I was giving alms. That kiss seemed to my heart like a kiss given by God.

3*rd*. — Everything was singing this morning while I was at my prayers — thrushes, finches, and my little linnet. It was just like spring; and this evening here we have clouds, cold, gloom, winter again — melancholy winter. I don't much like it; but each season must be good, since God has made them all. Therefore, let frost, wind, snow, fogs, clouds, weather of every description, be welcome! Is it not sinful to complain when one is warm and comfortable beside the fire, while so many poor people are shivering out of doors? At twelve o'clock a

beggar found great delight in a plateful of hot soup that was given to him at the door, and did perfectly well without sunshine. Surely, then, so may I. The fact is, one longs for something pleasant this day of general amusement, and we wanted to keep our Shrove Tuesday in the sun, out of doors, and in taking long walks ; whereas we have been obliged to limit ourselves to the hamlet, where every one wanted to feast us. We thanked, without taking anything, as we had had dinner. The little children came about us like chickens. I made them prick some nuts that I had put into my pocket to give them. Twenty years hence they will remember our visit, because we gave them something good, and the memory will be pleasant. Those were well employed nuts. I did not write yesterday, because I thought it was not worth while to write down nothings. It is the same, however, to-day. All our days are pretty nearly alike, but only as to what is external. The life of the soul is different ; nothing more varied, changing constantly. Don't let us speak of it ; there would be no end of it, if it were only about one single hour. I am going to write to Louise : this by way of fixing myself in a happy mood.

4*th*. — This morning I hung up beside Papa's bed a little cross that a little girl gave him yes-

terday, out of thankfulness to him for having placed her in the convent. It was Christine Roquier. Her pious present was very pleasing to us, and we shall preserve it as a relic of gratitude. Papa's cup of holy water shall be placed between this cross and a picture of Calvary. This picture, torn as it is, I have a value for, because I have always seen it there, and that when a child I used to go and say my prayers before it. I remember to have asked many favours from the holy image. I used to state all my little griefs to that sad figure of the dying Saviour, and always I found consolation. Once I had spots on my frock that distressed me greatly for fear of being scolded about them; I prayed my picture to make them disappear, and they disappeared. How this gracious miracle made me love *the good God!* From that day I believed nothing impossible to prayer or to my favourite image, and I asked it for whatever I wanted: once that my doll might have a soul; but on that occasion I obtained nothing. Perhaps it was the only one.

7th. — To-day a new hearthstone has been placed in the kitchen. I have just been standing upon it, and I note down here this sort of consecration of the stone, of which the stone will retain no trace. It is an event here, this stone,

somewhat like a new altar in a church. Every one goes to see it, and hopes to pass pleasant hours and a long life before this hearth of the house (for all gather there, masters and servants). But who can tell? . . . I myself shall perhaps be the first to leave. My mother departed early, and they say that I am like her.

8th. — Last night I had a grand dream. The ocean came up under our windows. I saw it; I heard its billows rolling like thunder, for it was of a sea in storm that I had this vision, and I was terrified.

A young elm springing up, with a bird singing on it, dispelled this terror. I listened to the bird: no more ocean and no more dreams.

9th. — The day broke mild and beautiful; no rain or wind. My bird was singing all morning long, and I too, for I felt cheerful, and had a presage of some happiness for to-day. Here it is, my friend: it is a letter from thee! Oh, if I only got such every day! I must now write to Louise.

While I was writing, the clouds and wind all returned. Nothing more variable than the sky and one's own soul! Good-night!

10th. — Oh, the beautiful moonbeam that has just fallen on the Gospel that I was reading!

11th. — To-day, at five o'clock in the morn-

ing, fifty-seven years had elapsed since my father came into the world. We all went — he, Mimi, and I — to church as soon as we were up, to celebrate this anniversary and to hear mass. To pray God is indeed the only way to celebrate anything here below. Accordingly, I have prayed a great deal on this day, when the most tender, most loving, best of fathers was born. May God preserve him to us, and add to his years so many more that I shall not see them end! My God! no, I would not be the last to die; to go to heaven before all the rest would be my delight. But why speak of death on a birthday? It is because life and death are sisters, and born together like twins.

To-morrow I shall not be here. I shall have left thee, my dear little room! Papa takes me with him to Caylus. This journey gives me little satisfaction: I do not like going away, changing place, or sky, or life; and all these change when we travel. Adieu, then, my confidant! thou must wait for me in my desk. Who knows when we shall meet again? I say in a week; but who can reckon upon anything in this world? Nine years ago I spent a month at Caylus. It will not be without pleasure that I shall see the place again, as well as my cousin, her daughter, and the good chevalier who used

to be so fond of me. They will have it that he is still so; I am going to find out. It is possible that he may be the same, but he will find me much changed since ten years ago. Ten years are a whole age for a woman; so we shall be about contemporaries, for the worthy man is over fourscore.

12*th.* — It was a real distress to me to go away; Papa discovered it and left me behind. He said to me last night, "Do as you like." I wanted to stay, and felt quite sad, thinking that to-night I should be far away from here, far from Mimi, from my fire, my little room, my books; far from Trilby, far from my bird; everything, down to the merest trifle, presents itself when you are about to leave, and so twines itself around you that there is no breaking loose. This is my experience, whenever there is any talk of a journey. Like the dove, I like to return every evening to my nest. No other spot attracts me.

I love but the flowers our own streamlets keep bright,
  But the meadows whose grass I have oft trodden down,
But the woods on whose branches our own birds alight,
  But my every-day sky, my horizon long known.

Nine o'clock! this is the hour that the pious soul hears strike with most recollection. It was at the ninth hour, the Gospel tells us,

that darkness covered the earth while Jesus hung upon the cross. It was also at the ninth hour that the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles. Accordingly, this hour has been blessed by the Church, and consecrated to prayer. It is then that the canons begin their services.

14*th*. — This has been one of my happy days: of those days that begin and end sweet as a cup of milk. God be praised for this day, spent without any sadness! Such are so rare in life; and my soul, more than any other, afflicts itself about the least thing. A word, a memory, a tone of voice, a sad expression of face, a nameless nothing, will often disturb the serenity of my spirit — small sky, that the lightest clouds can tarnish. This morning I received a letter from Gabrielle, that cousin who is dear to me on account of her gentleness and her sweet disposition. I was anxious about her always delicate health, having heard nothing of her for more than a month, and thus her letter gave me so much pleasure that I opened it before my prayers; I was in such a hurry to read it. To see a letter and not open it is a thing impossible. So I read it. Amongst other things, I saw that Gabrielle did not approve my taste for retirement and renouncement of the world. The

reason is that she does not know me ; that she is younger than I, and has not discovered that there is an age when the heart becomes indifferent to whatever does not give it life. The world may enchant, may intoxicate it ; but this is not life, which is only found in God and in *one's self*. To be alone with God, oh, happiness supreme !

At Cahuzac I had another letter given me. This last was from Lili, another sweet friend, but one quite out of the world : a pure soul, a soul like snow in its innocence, so white that I am dazzled when I look at it — a soul made for the eyes of God. She bids me go to her, but I will not leave home before Easter. After that I shall go to Rayssac, and on my way back shall remain as long as I can with Lili. I was returning from Cahuzac quite pleased with my letter, when I saw a little boy beside the fountain crying in a heartbreaking way. It was because he had broken his jug, and the poor child was afraid of being beaten by his father. Not that he himself told me so ; he was sobbing too violently ; but some women did who had seen the jug fall. Poor little fellow ! I saw that I might easily console him by an outlay of sixpence ; and, taking him by the hand, I led him to the crockery shop, where he replaced his jug.

Charles X. could not be happier if he regained his crown. Was this not indeed a sweet day?

15*th*. — Mud, rain, a wintry sky — inconvenient weather for a Sunday; but it is all one to me, just the same as sunshine. Not through indifference though: I prefer fine weather; but all weather is good. When there is serenity within, what matters the rest? I went to Lentin, where I heard very bad preaching, as I thought. That beautiful Word of God, how disfigured it gets passing through certain lips! One needs to know beforehand that it comes from heaven. I am going to vespers in spite of the weather. I brought back a flower from Andillac, the first I have seen this year. There were some like it at the altar of the Virgin, whose feet they perfumed. It is the custom among our village girls to offer her the first flowers of their gardens — a pious and charming custom: nothing better adorns a country altar. I leave my flower here as a souvenir of the Sunday nearest to spring.

16*th*. — Another letter from G——; a letter to announce her marriage. How little I thought of it! She is so young, so delicate, so fragile! One sees only a spark of vitality in that little childish frame. My God, how much I desire her happiness! but do not feel sure . . . I see nothing

bright in the prospect of her marriage. I must, however, offer her my congratulations : it is the custom. I have spent the whole day thinking of her, trying to picture to myself her future, and pondering those words in her letter, "*I am calm only when on my knees.*"

17*th*. — It is an entirely fresh heart this of G——'s, and therefore she may be happy if her husband prove amiable, because she will love him with all the charm of a first affection.

I am listening to the shepherd whistling in the valley. This is the most cheerful sound that can proceed from human lips. This whistle denotes an absence of care, a sense of well-being, an *I am content*, which pleases me. These poor people must needs have something or other : they have cheerfulness. Two little children are also singing while making up their fagot of branches among the sheep. From time to time they interrupt themselves to laugh or play, the sense of their responsibilities escaping them. I should like to watch their proceedings, and to listen to the blackbird singing in the hedge beside the brook ; but I mean to read. It is Massillon that I am reading, now that we are in Lent. I admire his Friday's discourse on prayer, which is really a hymn.

18*th*. — This morning the shepherd informed

me of the arrival of the wagtails; one has followed the flock the whole day. This is a good omen: we shall soon have flowers. It is also believed that these birds bring good luck to the flocks. The shepherds revere them as a species of genii, and would on no account kill one; if that misfortune happened, the finest sheep in the flock would be sure to die! I only wish this simple credulity preserved in like manner many other small birds that our rustics so cruelly destroy, and about which I used to fret not a little formerly. The sorrows of the nests were one of my childish griefs. I used to think about the mothers and the children, and I was miserable not to be able to protect the innocent creatures. I used to recommend them to God.

I said: My God, or let them not be born,
Or from misfortune guard;
Guard these poor fledgelings, Thou who hast the power,
From vulture's claw, and hands and hearts as hard.

Some have I seen from ivy-curtained nest,
Some from tall trees, or sand-holes, snatched away.
And sad as I, when shut from air and light,
All perished in a day.

And all had sung, and all — their wings once grown —
Had flown through forests and across the seas,
And with young flowers the swallows had returned
Upon the vernal breeze.

You 'd watch them, children, flying 'neath the clouds,
You 'd hear them sing at morn the summer long;
Oh, how much better than to see them caged!
No liberty, no song!

19*th*. — I don't know where these birds might not have led me, so many memories did they awaken and such tenderness did I feel towards them. Here I am now filled with joyous expectation; Papa is coming back this evening. I am longing for him; a week's absence is long when people are not accustomed to be separated. Moreover, this is the festival of Saint Joseph, the saint Papa is named after; it cannot fail to be a beautiful day; I celebrated it by going to hear mass, — that is my "bouquet;" prayers are divine flowers.

20*th*. — Papa has arrived, fresh, well, and delighted with the reception given him at my cousin's of La Gardelle. The evening was spent in talking of that nice family, who love us, of their neighbours, their Curé. The life of country curés is interesting, and I like to be told about it. In short, what with one thing and the other, we had plenty to talk about till after ten o'clock, when each of us is about to go to sleep as usual, without having heard all there was to hear.

I have no inclination to write to-day, and

would rather sew. The needle suits me better than the pen; I return to it. The first thing this morning we had a letter from Marie, and a report of 'The Propagation of the Faith,' — something for the heart and something for the soul. Marie sends us loving words; the missionaries tell us of conversions. How admirable these men are; how gladly I give them my weekly penny! I should like to see thee enrolled in this association.

21*st.* — I believe that to-day is the first of spring. I should not have discovered it; the cold and the east wind blowing would lead one to suppose it January. In a short time the cold will go away: patience, poor impatient one that I am, longing to see flowers, a bright sky, — to breathe an air all balmy with spring! When that comes to pass I shall have numbered a few more days, perhaps a few more cares; and this is how our enjoyments come! However, I had a delightful waking this morning. As I was opening my eyes a lovely moon faced my window, and shone into my bed, so brightly that at first I thought it was a lamp suspended to my shutter. It was very sweet and pretty to look at this white light, and so I contemplated, admired, watched it till it hid itself behind the shutter, to peep out again, and then conceal itself like a child playing at hide-and-seek.

I have been to confession; I reflected for some time upon the gentle, beautiful, moral lessons of M. Bories, then I wrote to Louise, and now here: how many sweet things I have to do! Were I to write them all down just now I should write too much; I should not be able to sleep, and I must sleep to be able to think of God and pray to Him to-morrow, which is Sunday. This fragile body that contains the soul must be considered. This is tiresome; but what can be done? The angels have no such anxiety, — happy angels!

24*th*. — I see beautiful sunshine coming in from without to light up my little room. This brightness glorifies it and keeps me here, though I want to go downstairs. I am so fond of what comes down from heaven! Moreover, I admire my wall all tapestried with sunbeams, and a chair over which they fall like drapery. Never had I a more beautiful room. It is a pleasure to be in it and to enjoy it as something of one's own. Oh, what lovely weather! I long to be revelling in it, inhaling great draughts of the air, so genial to-day; but this will be for the afternoon. This morning I have to write. Yesterday three persons and some books arrived, all friendly visits. The afternoon passed in chatting, in listening to all sorts

of things that Madame Roquier has a way of relating as interesting news, or in amusing her little girl, a child of four, fresh as a first rose. It was a pleasure to kiss her round cheeks and to see her nibbling jumbles. Mimi and I are both invited to attend the benediction of a bell to-morrow. This expedition is by no means displeasing to me.

26*th*. — 'T is a pretty thing, a bell surrounded by tapers and clothed in white, like a child about to be baptised. They anoint it, sing, then test it, and it makes answer by a little tinkling that it is a Christian bell, and will ring for God. For what besides, — for it answers twice? "For all the holy things of earth, — for birth, death, prayer, sacrifice; for the righteous; for sinners. In the morning I will announce the dawn, in the evening the fall of day; a heavenly timepiece, I will ring the Angelus and the holy hours when God wills to be praised. At my call pious souls will pronounce the name of Jesus, of Mary, or of some much-loved saint; their glances will rise to heaven, or within the church walls their heart will distil itself into love."

This I thought and other things besides, in the presence of that small bell at Itzac which I saw blessed in the midst of a crowd that looked on without, as it seemed, thinking of anything,

and who were equally taken up with us and the bell. Two young ladies were in fact curious and quite novel things to the inhabitants of Itzac. Poor creatures!

27*th*. — At two o'clock Papa set out for Alby, where Lili requires him on account of her affairs So here we are alone again for I know not how many days, for it is possible that Papa may go to Rayssac. If so I shall have news of Louise when he returns. I am impatient for them; for a long time I have known nothing of this dear friend. It is not that she forgets me, — that I cannot think. If I thought it. . . . No, no; Louise loves me and will always be my friend. That is a settled point, and we are no longer at the beginning of things, when doubts regarding our friendship might be possible. It is either because she cannot write to me, or that the charcoal-burners lose letters. Tiresome people! if they only knew what they lose!

28*th*. — I have just escaped a sorrow; my little linnet was actually in the cat's claws when I entered my room. I saved it by giving a great cuff to the cat, who let go. The bird was only frightened; then it felt so delighted at its deliverance that it began singing with all its might, as if to thank me and assure me that terror had

not deprived it of its voice. A cowherd who passes along the Cordes road also sings as he drives his cart; but with such a listless, insipid expression that I prefer the warbling of the linnet. When I am here alone I take pleasure in listening to all that stirs outside; I lend my ear to every sound: the cackling of a hen, branches falling, the buzz of a fly, — whatever it be, it interests and gives me subjects for thought. How often I fall to contemplate and follow the movements of very minute insects that I discover in the pages of a book, on the tiles, or on the table! I do not know their name, but we come into a kind of relationship as of passers-by along the same road. We lose sight of, then we meet each other again by chance, and the meeting gives me pleasure; but the little creatures fly from me, though I have never done them harm. It seems that I must be very alarming to them. Would it have been so in Paradise? We are not told that Eve frightened anything there. It was only after the fall that mutual terror sprung up between created things. I really must write to Philibert.

20*th*. — Yesterday evening I began my letter *to over the seas*, which I write with inexpressible interest on account of the memories it

awakes and the dangers it will have to encounter. Is it possible that a sheet of paper cast upon the ocean should reach its address, should just go and fall under the very eyes of my cousin in his island? It is incredible unless some angel navigator take the letter under his wing. This Isle of France is in fact at the very end of the world. Poor Philibert! How far away from here he is, and how much to be pitied! he who is so fond of his country, his relatives, his beautiful European sky. I remember the last evening we spent together, and how ecstatically he contemplated those stars of his own land which were soon to disappear from him.

He especially regretted the Pole-star, which one sees no more after crossing the line. Then it is that the Southern Cross comes into sight. The Southern Cross is very beautiful, but "never," he said to me, "have I looked at it, or at any of our African constellations, so long as at that little northern star: —

'Stars of the beautiful sky of France,
Of the beautiful land of my birth,
I shall see you no more — with the ocean between —
At the uttermost end of the earth,
Where my days will pass in sadness and sighs,
Seeing no longer you — seeing other skies,
Stars of the beautiful sky of France!'"

This it was, methinks, our poor cousin was saying to me, and it made my heart ache. How much to be pitied are all exiles! Nothing pleases them while absent from their own country. With his wife and children Philibert is sad in Africa; in France he would have been happy.

30*th*. — Two letters have come: the one of joy, an announcement of the marriage of Sophie Decazes; the other of mourning, to tell us of death. This last is from M. de La Morvonnais, who writes to me weeping, quite full of his dear Marie. How he loved her, and loves her still! They were two souls that could not bear to leave each other. Accordingly they will remain united in spite of death, and separated from the body where no life is. This is Christian union, a union spiritual, immortal; a divine tie formed by the love, the charity that never dieth. Hippolyte in his widower state is not alone; he sees Marie, Marie everywhere, Marie always. "Speak to me of her, always of her," he says: and again, "Write to me often; you have certain modes of expression that vividly recall her to me." I was not the least aware of this; it is God's doing, who has infused into my soul some things akin to that other soul. That is why she loved me and I her: sympathy

springs from relation of souls; and then, moreover, I found in Marie something infinitely gentle, that I so delight in, that can only emanate from a pure spirit. "The true mark of innocence," says Bossuet, "is gentleness." How many charms, what advantages, I should have enjoyed in this celestial friendship! God decided otherwise, and has taken it away just one year after it was first granted me. Why so soon? No complaining! God does not allow it on account of what He removes from us, or of a few days of separation. Those who die do not go so far away after all; for heaven is quite close to every one of us. We have but to raise our eyes and we see their dwelling. Let us console ourselves by that sweet prospect; let us become resigned on earth, which is but a step to the gate of Paradise.

1st April. — So then a month has passed, half sad, half beautiful, much like the whole of life. This month of March has some gleams of spring, which are very sweet; it is the first to see any flowers, — a few pimpernels that open a little to the sun, some violets in the woods under the dead leaves that screen them from the hoar frost. The little children amuse themselves with them and call them *March flowers*, — a very appropriate name. We dry them too

to make "tea" of them. This flower is good and soothing for colds, and, like hidden virtue, its perfume betrays it. Swallows have been seen to-day, glad harbingers of spring.

2*nd*. — To-day my whole soul turns from the sky to a tomb; for on it sixteen years ago my mother died at midnight. This sad anniversary is sacred to mourning and prayer. I have spent it before God in regret and hope; even while I weep I look up and see the heavens where my mother is doubtless happy, for she suffered so much — the illness was long and her spirit patient. I do not remember a single complaint escaping her, nor that she cried out ever so slightly in spite of the pain that tore her; no Christian ever bore suffering better. One saw that she had learned it before the cross. She would smile upon her bed like a martyr on the rack. Her face never lost its serenity, and even in her dying moments she seemed to be thinking of a festival. This surprised me who saw her suffer so much, and myself cried at the least thing, and did not know what resignation under pain meant. And when they told me that she was going to die, I looked at her, and her cheerful aspect made me disbelieve them. She did die, however, at midnight on the 2nd of April, while I had fallen asleep at the foot of her bed.

Her gentle death did not waken me ; never did any soul leave the world more quietly. It was my father. . . . Oh God ! I hear the priest ; I see lighted tapers, a pale face in tears ! I was led away into another room.

3*rd.* — At nine o'clock in the morning my mother was laid in the tomb.

4*th.* — I am going to Cahuzac with the sun straight above my head. If this tires me I shall think of the saint of the day, Saint Macarius, toiling along in the desert beneath a basket of sand to get rid of a temptation. He afflicted his body in order to save his soul.

8*th.* — I don't know why I have put down nothing for four days ; I return to it now that I find myself alone in my room. Solitude leads to writing, because it leads to thought. One enters into conversation with one's own soul. I ask mine what it has seen to-day, what it has learnt, what it has loved, — for every day it loves something. This morning I saw a beautiful sky, and the budding chestnut-tree, and heard little birds singing. I was listening to them beneath the great oak, near Téoulé, whose basin was being cleaned out. These pretty songs and this washing of the fountain suggested different trains of thought ; the birds delighted me, and when I saw the escape of

the muddy water, so clear a short time before, I could not but regret that it had been troubled, and pictured to myself one's soul when something stirs it up; for even the most beautiful loses its charm when you stir the bottom, there being a little mud at the bottom of every human soul. But is it worth while to take ink out of the inkstand to write thee all these inutilities? It would be better to speak of Jean Tamisier, who, seated near the porch, related to me some of his adventures in his rounds. I thanked him for it by a glass of wine which will give him a fresh flow of words, as well as legs to reach his sleeping-place to-night. Then I read a sermon; not being able to go and hear one, I make my little room a church, where methinks I can find God, and without any disturbing causes. When I have prayed I reflect, when I have meditated I read, then sometimes I write; and all this goes on before a little cross on the table as before an altar — below is the drawer which holds my letters, my relics.

9th. — This morning I meditated upon the tears of the Magdalen. What sweet tears, and how beautiful a history, that of this woman who loved so much! Here is Papa; I leave everything.

13th. — Since Papa's return I have laid by

my journal, my books, and many things. There come these days of exhaustion, when the soul retires from all its affections, and sinks back upon itself in utter weariness. This weariness without fatigue, what else is it but weakness? We must conquer it, like so many other weaknesses that attack this poor soul of ours. If we did not kill them one by one, they would end by fretting us away, as worms do cloth. I pass so suddenly from sadness to joy; when I say *joy* I mean that sweet, calm happiness of the soul which only shows externally as serenity. A letter, a thought of God or of those I love, will have this effect upon me, and yet sometimes too a quite contrary one. It is when I take things ill that they sadden me. God knows the fears and the raptures He gives; you, my friends, do not know how sweet and bitter both you are to me. Do you remember, Maurice, that little short letter which tormented me for a fortnight? How cold, how indifferent, how little kind you seemed to me!

I have just been suspending the sacred branch to my "bénitier." Yesterday was Palm Sunday, the festival of children, who are so happy with these consecrated branches, dressed up with cakes in the church. This joyous entrance of theirs is no doubt granted them in memory

of the hosannas sung by children to Jesus in the temple. God leaves nothing unrewarded. Here is my copybook come to an end! Shall I begin another? I know not. Good-bye to this one and to thee!

II.

14th April, 1835.

WHY should I not go on writing to thee, my dear Maurice? This book will please thee as much as the two others; I go on therefore. Will you not be very glad to know that I have just been spending a pleasant quarter of an hour on the terrace steps, seated by the side of an old woman, who was singing me a lamentable ballad on an event that occurred long ago at Cahuzac? This came about *à propos* of a gold cross that has been stolen from the neck of the blessed Virgin. The old woman remembered her grandmother telling her that she had heard in olden times of this same church being the scene of a still more sacrilegious robbery, since it was then the blessed sacrament that was carried off one day when it was left exposed in the empty church. A young girl came to the altar while everybody was busy in the harvest, and, mounting upon it, put the pyx into her apron, and went and placed it under a rose-tree in a wood. The shepherds who discovered it told where it was, and nine priests came in pro-

cession to adore the blessed sacrament under the rose-tree, and to carry it back to the church. But for all that, the poor shepherdess was arrested, tried, and condemned to be burned. Just when about to die, she requested to confess, and owned the fact to a priest; but it was not, she said, because of any thievish propensities she took it, but that she wanted to have the blessed sacrament in the forest. "I thought that the good God would be as satisfied under a rose-tree as on an altar." At these words an angel descended from heaven to announce her pardon, and to comfort the pious criminal, who was burnt on a stake of which the rose-tree formed the first fagot. This is what the beggar-woman said to me, while I listened to her as to a nightingale.

I heartily thanked her, and then offered her something as payment for her ballad; but she would only take flowers. "Give me a bit of that beautiful lilac." I gave her four bunches, big as plumes, and the poor old woman went off, her stick in one hand, her nosegay in another; and I back into the house with her ballad.

15*th*. — On waking I heard the nightingale, but only a sigh, a mere hint of his voice. I listened a long while, and heard nothing more.

The charming musician had only just arrived, and was merely announcing himself. It was like the first sweep of the bow of a great concert. Everything sings or is about to sing now.

I have not read the life of the saint of to-day. I am going to do so; it is my custom before dinner. I find that while one is eating, while one is at the *manger*, it is well to have something spiritual in one's mind, like the life of a saint.

It is charming, this life of Saint Macédone, he who by his prayers obtained the birth of Theodoret, and who said to a huntsman, who marvelled to find the saint on the mountain-side, "You pursue animals, and I, I follow after God." These words include the whole life of saints and that of men of the world.

We have an additional guest in the kitchen, a cricket brought in this evening amongst some herbs. There it is established on our hearth, where the little creature will sing when it is merry. . . .

Holy Thursday. — I am come in, all fragrant from the chapel of moss, where the blessed sacrament rests. It is a beautiful day this, when God deigns to repose amidst the flowers and perfumes of spring. We did our very best, Mimi, I, and Rose, the pew-opener, to make this resting-

place, and we had the assistance of M. the Curé. I thought, while thus occupied, of the guest-chamber, the well-furnished room where Jesus willed to keep the passover with His disciples, giving Himself for the lamb. Oh, what a gift! What can one say of the Eucharist? I know not; — one adores, possesses, lives, loves; — the speechless soul loses itself in an abyss of joy. I thought of thee amidst these ecstasies, and would have given much to have had thee by my side at the holy table as thou wert three years ago.

Easter Thursday. — Here are several days that I have written neither to thee nor any one else. The services have occupied all my time, and I have lived, so to speak, in the church. Sweet and sacred life, that I regret to see come to an end! but I find it again here whenever I will. I open the door of my little room, and there I enjoy calm, meditative solitude. I know not why I ever leave it.

There is just now on my window-sill a bird, who has come to visit mine. He is frightened — he is off — and the poor caged one is saddened, and flutters as if he wanted to make his escape. I should do the same were I in his place, and yet I keep him prisoner. Shall I open his cage? He would fly away, would

sing, build his nest, be happy ; but he would be mine no longer, and I am fond of him and like having him. I shall keep him. Poor little linnet, thou wilt always be a prisoner ; I enjoy thee at the cost of thy liberty ; I pity, and yet detain thee ! So it is that pleasure triumphs over justice. But what would'st thou do, if I gave thee thy liberty ? Dost know that thy wings, which have never been spread, could not carry thee far into that wide expanse thou seest through the wires of thy cage ? Then thy food — thou would'st not know where to find it. Thou hast never tasted what thy brothers eat, and, indeed, they would probably banish thee like a stranger from their family feast. Better stay with me, who care for thee. By night the dew would wet thy feathers, and the cold of early morning would prevent thee from singing.

In digging the field a stone has been turned up which covered a large hole ; I am going to see it. Jack, furnished with a rope, has been down into the cave and explored it on all sides. It is nothing but an excavation, incrusted with pretty little stones, rough, like sugared almonds ; I kept some as a memento of our discovery. Some day I will go down into the grotto, and perhaps I shall see something more there than Jack did.

24*th*. — All yesterday I was expecting the postman, hoping for letters from thee. They will come to-morrow, no doubt. This is how I comfort myself at every mail, this last fortnight that I have been kept in suspense. It is a very long time, and I begin to be uneasy at your silence. Can you be ill? This idea occurs to me a hundred times a day, and at night when I awake. "Get away!" I tell it; "I do not believe thee." But yet it is possible. The son of M. de Fenelons has too surely just died in Paris. My God! how sad to die far from one's own people, far from one's home! To-morrow I write to thee.

And now let us speak of other things. From M. Hippolyte's letter Papa hopes that we may see him here. It would be a great happiness to us to have him, and to pay him some small part of what we owe him for his friendship to thee. Who can tell what he might think of Cayla, our climate, and ourselves? People often form ideas about the unknown, of which reality destroys the charm. Besides, I should not like him to come without thee. What would Cayla be to him without Maurice? — a desert in which he would soon weary of being alone. If he brought me his daughter, as he once spoke of doing, then he would feel very differently; his little

girl would give a charm to everything, and Cayla might appear Le Val. I, too, should be very glad to see that child, to hold her on my knees, to caress and embrace her, to have her in my keeping for a few days. I could never say how much that little creature interests me, attaches me, no doubt, through her mother's memory; and then the poor child is made so interesting by her bereavement! Alas! it is so sad to have no mother, and especially at her age — at two years old. Young as she is, she already feels her loss, and will feel it more every day. The heart learns to sorrow as it learns to love. As she grows up, Marie will go on loving her mother more and mourning her more. Her future occupies me a good deal: I should like to know whether she will live, or whether God will recall her to Himself before she becomes acquainted with evil. This would be a sad thing for her father; but for her, oh, certainly not! Can one regret that a soul should go to heaven in all its innocence? What a beautiful death a child's is, and how one blesses those little coffins that the Church accompanies with gladness to the grave! I love them; I contemplate them; I approach them as I do a cradle; only I pity the mothers, I pray God to console them, and God does console them if they be Christians.

I have only written here to-day. I do not know why it has become thus necessary for me to write, were it but two words. Writing is my sign of life, as flowing is that of the fountain. I would not say it to others, it would appear such folly. Who knows what it is, this effusion of my soul — this want of pouring itself out before God and before some fellow-creature? I say some fellow-creature; for it seems to me that thou art there, that this page is thee, and God, it seems to me, does listen to me, nay, answers me in a way that the soul hears, and that cannot be communicated. When I am alone, seated here or kneeling before my crucifix, I fancy myself Mary, quietly listening to the Saviour's words. During the deep silence, when God alone speaks to it, my soul is happy, and, as it were, dead to all that is going on below or above, within, without; but this does not last long. "Come, my poor soul," I say, "return to the things of this world!" and I take up my distaff, or a book, or a saucepan, or else I caress Wolf or Trilby. There you have the life of heaven on earth. Just now I was milking one of our ewes. Oh, what good milk; and how much I should like to have made thee taste it, this good ewe milk of Cayla! My friend, how many enjoyments thou losest by not being here!

Eight o'clock. I must briefly note an excellent supper that Papa, Mimi, and I have just made, by the kitchen fire, upon the servant's soup, boiled potatoes, and a cake that I baked yesterday in the oven with the bread. We had no one to wait on us but our dogs, Lion, Wolf, and Trilby, who, as it behoved them, licked up the crumbs. All our people are at church, at the catechising which goes on every evening preparatory to the confirmation. This meal in the chimney corner, surrounded by dogs and cats — this tray, put on the logs of wood, was charming. Nothing was wanted to make it perfect but the cricket's chirp and thee. Have I not chattered enough to-day? and now I am going to listen to the "Vialarette," who is come back from Cordes. Another pleasure!

25*th*. — Here I am! before me a charming nosegay of lilacs that I have just been gathering on the terrace. My little room is made balmy by it. I sit here as if in a flower-pot, so much perfume do I inhale.

26*th*. — I don't know what took me away from the flowers yesterday; since then I have seen others in the Cahuzac road, which is entirely bordered with hawthorn. It is a pleasure to trot along midst all this fragrance, and to hear the little birds singing here and there in the hedges.

Nothing is so delightful as these morning walks in spring, and I do not grudge rising early to insure myself this delight. Soon I shall be getting up at five o'clock. I regulate my hours by the sun, and we rise together. In winter he is idle, and so am I, and I only leave my bed about seven ; and even then the day seems long sometimes, when the sky is cloudy, or when I am sad and waiting for a little sunshine, or some brightness in my own soul. Then the time is long. My God! to think of finding one day long, when the whole of life is nothing! The truth is that *ennui* has got hold of me, that it keeps possession of me, and that all that lasts long brings something of eternity into time. Oh, how I pity a soul in purgatory, where waiting causes such suffering ; and then what a waiting! Can we put in comparison with it any of our expectations here below, whether of fortune, glory, or whatever else makes the human heart pant? One alone may perhaps be a shadow of it : love waiting for what it loves. Accordingly, Fénélon compares heavenly felicity to that of a mother at the moment when she once more sees the son she had believed dead. Twelve o'clock strikes : the time for writing is over.

Whenever I see passing by the cross a man

who crosses himself or takes off his hat, I say to myself, "There goes a Christian!" and I feel a reverence for him, and do not bolt the doors if I chance to be alone in the house; on the contrary, I stand at the window and watch that good Christian figure as long as I can, as I have just now been doing. One has nothing to fear from those who fear God. I would willingly have opened my door to the stranger I saw bowing before the cross. May God be with him, wherever he goes! I, too, am just running off, but not very far — only to the church for vespers. It is Sunday, — a day of expeditions for the body and seclusion for the soul, which therefore retires within itself and leaves thee. Another post-day, and I have no letter. What canst thou be thinking of, my friend?

27*th*. — I met the little hero of the *jug*. The poor child has lost his father; his mother, too, is dead; and ever since the orphan has a touching habit. He takes a handkerchief into bed, places it beside him in the place that was his mother's, and falls asleep sucking it. A gentle illusion this, that consoles him, and attaches him so much to his bit of handkerchief, that if he wakes without it between his lips he screams and cries. Then he calls for his

mother, tells her to return, and can only compose himself with his doll. Innocent want, this of the doll, most worthy of a child's spirit, and even of the grown man; for every mourner has his too, and solaces himself with the least image of his lost happiness.

28th. — When everybody is busy, and I am not wanted, I go into retreat, and come here at all hours to write, read, or pray. I note down here, too, what goes on, either in my mind or in the house; and in this way we shall be able to find again day by day the whole past. For me what passes is of little worth, and I should not write it down, but that I say, "Maurice will be very glad to see what we were doing while he was away, and to re-enter thus into the family life;" and so I note it for thee.

But I observe that I hardly make any mention of others, and that my egotism always occupies the stage. I keep saying, "I do this; I have seen that, have thought so and so;" leaving the public in the background, after the manner of self-love; but mine is that of the heart, which knows only how to speak of itself. The inferior painter can but give his own portrait to his friend; the great painter has pictures to offer. So I go on with the portrait. But for the rain we had this morning, I should be now

at Gaillac. Much obliged to the rain ; I would rather be here. What drawing-room can be so pleasant as my bed-room ? what companionship should I have had equal to what surrounds me now ? Bossuet, Saint Augustine, and other holy books, that speak to me when I will, enlighten, console, strengthen me, correspond to all my needs. To leave them grieves me ; to take them with me is difficult : the best plan is not to leave them.

In my leisure moments I am reading a work of Leibnitz, which charms me by its catholicity and the admirable pious passages it contains, as, for instance, this on confession : " I look upon a pious, earnest, and discreet confessor as a great instrument in the hands of God for the salvation of souls ; for his counsels serve to direct our affections, to enlighten us as to our faults, to help us to avoid occasions of sin, to dissipate doubts, to raise the downcast spirit ; in short, to remove or mitigate all diseases of the soul ; and if we can hardly find anything on earth more excellent than a faithful friend, what happiness to find one who shall be bound by the inviolable religion of a divine sacrament to preserve the faith and to succour souls ! "

Now this heavenly friend I have in M.

Bories: hence the tidings of his departure profoundly afflict me. I am sad with a sadness which makes the soul weep. I should not say this elsewhere: it would be taken ill, and, perhaps, would not be understood. The world does not know what a confessor is to one: the man who is the friend of the soul, its most intimate confidant, its physician, its master, its light; he who binds us and looses, who gives us peace, who opens the gates of heaven; to whom we speak upon our knees, calling him, as we do God, our Father; nay, faith makes him in very deed God and Father to us. When I am at his feet, I see in him only Jesus listening to the Magdalen, and forgiving her much because she has loved much. Confession is but the expansion of repentance into love.[1]

5th May (at Gaillac). — Nothing was spoken of yesterday evening but the death of a young girl just as she was coming away from a ball, where she had spent the night. Poor young

[1] The reader will find the preceding passage literally repeated in the next book; we have not felt authorized to suppress the repetition; it only proves the special importance Mademoiselle de Guérin attached to these ideas, and possibly the secret satisfaction that she may have unconsciously felt in expressing them in so concise and emphatic a manner.

girl's soul! where art thou? I have too many occupations to listen to my own thoughts. Let them retire.

9th. — And I too have just returned from a dance, being the first I have seen and shared in; but my heart was not in cue, and yearned for rest; and besides, I danced ill, both from want of taste and habit. I heard myself laughed at, and this did not amuse me; but I amused the laughers, which was one way of lending one's self to the promotion of pleasure. I did so with hearty good will; but this complaisance would soon weary me, as everything belonging to the world does, since I always feel myself a stranger there. Seated on a sofa, I keep thinking of the greensward, or the chestnut-tree, or the rabbit-warren, where one is so much better off.

Oh, leave to me my reveries,
  My own pure sky, my valleys fair,
My streamlets running where they please,
My flowery hills, my forest trees,
  My blue-waved river flowing there.

And let my life, that stream beside,
  Like it pursue its onward way,
Far from the loud world's pomp and pride,
Not deep, but ever clear its tide,
  And careless of the future day.

Thus let it glide on, sweet and slow,
Bordered with flowers, the hills between,
Playing with moss shreds in its flow,
With grasses waving to and fro,
With willow branches dropping in.

My hours, rocked by each wind that blows,
Linked hand in hand, steal soft away;
In their light track my thoughts unclose,
As fast and fresh as grass that grows
Beside the trodden public way.

They say that life is hard to bear.
My God! it is not so to me;
Two angels — Poetry and Prayer —
Like sister's love, like mother's care,
Cradle and keep it pure for thee.

Childlike, it still pursues a dream,
A hope, a wish, a memory,
Like butterfly beside a stream;
And in each morning's sunny gleam
It sees its whole futurity.

Drop upon drop, but honey-sweet,
Thus to its share the days are given;
There is not one it fears to meet, —
Oh God! thus doubtless at thy feet
The angels live in heaven.

And when this happy life is run,
Death must draw very gently nigh;
Like flowers half-faded by the sun
When the long summer day is done,
We only bend our heads and die.

And if but Faith and Hope be there,
Why, what is death? To close our eyes,
To concentrate ourselves in prayer,
To yield our soul to angels' care,
And sleep, to waken in the skies.

JUSTIN MAURICE.

This is the prettiest thing and the most to my taste that I have found since I have been here; accordingly, I take possession of it. If it be fine, I shall leave this evening. Enchanting idea! I shall see Papa, Mimi. What a sweet thing a return home is!

[*No date.*] — Here I am at this dear Cayla, and have been several days without telling thee. The fact is, in taking my copybook out of my portmanteau I placed it under a carpet, and there it has lain ever since. In rummaging about, my hand fell upon it, the book opened, and I continue the writing. It was a sweet moment when I saw my family again, — Papa, Mimi, Erembert, — who all embraced me so tenderly, and made me feel how deep the happiness of being loved.

Yesterday was a fortunate day; four letters and two friends arrived, M. Bories and the Abbé F——, the brother of Cécile. I do not know which of the two gave us most pleasure or was most agreeable, the one by his mind,

the other by his heart. We had a great deal of chat; we laughed, drank healths, and, as a wind-up, set to playing childish games, and cheating each other. No solemnity at all; it was a day of relaxation, when the soul takes its ease while retaining its bent; it was the mirthfulness of priests and Christian friends.

As we were at dessert, two letters were brought in, the one from Lili, the other from that poor Philibert,[1] who is more and more unhappy. This letter is heartbreaking. I read it out at table, and saw tears in the eyes of our good priests. M. Bories recalled that on the morning of his departure Philibert ran to his bedside, and said, "I am off, Monsieur le Curé; perhaps I am leaving my country for ever: say mass to-day, I beg you, to my intention." He did say it, I remember, and we attended it, my aunt and I weeping as much as we prayed. This good cousin says charmingly kind things to me, things that go to the heart, and may not pass the lips. I suppressed them in reading the letter. He speaks of my poetry written to my poor friend of Le Val, and sent to him by Papa. Thus, then, this memorial has crossed the seas, and they know at the other end of the world that I loved you, my poor Marie, but they do

[1] M. Philibert de Roquefeuil.

not know that I mourn you now, and that you have been so early taken from us! But they will know that, too; for I have written about this death to our friends in the Isle of France, and I shall feel that you are regretted by hearts most worthy to offer you their regrets.

Philibert is sending us two fans, and some seeds of marine plants, gathered by him and his wife in the Bay du Tombeau. What a hurry I am in to have them, to see them, — see them sprout, grow, blossom! They come in return for a rose-leaf that I sent him last spring. I was holding the rose in my hand, a petal fell on the letter, and I folded it up in it, and let it go, saying to myself that it had thus detached itself in order to take to that poor exile some of the perfume of his own country; and, in truth, it did give him very great delight.

18*th*. — Who could ever have guessed what has happened to me to-day? I am surprised, engrossed, and much pleased by it. I think and contemplate my present constantly, — my Creole poems, addressed to me by a poet of the Isle of France. I shall speak of them to-morrow, it is now too late; but I could not sleep without noting down here this event of my day and my life.

19*th*. — Here I am at the window, listening

to a chorus of nightingales, which sing in the Moulinasse in a ravishing way. Oh, the beautiful picture, the beautiful concert, which I have to quit, to go and take some relief to poor lame Annette!

22*nd*. — Mimi has left me for a fortnight; she is at ——, and I pity her in the midst of that paganism; she so holy and good a Christian! As Louise once said to me, she makes upon one the effect of a righteous soul in hell; but we shall get her away as soon as the time allowed to the proprieties is over. I, on my part, think it long; I get tired of my solitude, so much have I the habit of being two together. Papa is in the fields almost all the day, Eran out shooting; for sole society I have Trilby and my chickens, which are as noisy as imps, and occupy without amusing me, for *ennui* is at the very core and basis of my soul to-day. What I like best has little power to divert me. I have tried to read, write, pray, but each and all only lasted a moment; even prayer wearied me. 'T is sad, oh my God! Fortunately I recalled those words of Fénélon: "If God wearies you, tell Him that He wearies you." Oh, indeed, I did tell Him this folly!

23*rd*. — I have just spent the night in writing to thee. The day replaced the candle; it was

not worth while to go to bed. Oh, if Papa knew it!

24*th*. — How swiftly it passed, my friend, that night spent in writing to thee! The dawn appeared when I thought it was about midnight: it was three o'clock, though, and I had seen many a star pass; for from my window I can see the sky, and from time to time I look up to and consult it, and feel as though an angel were dictating to me. Whence, in fact, but from above, can come so many tender, exalted, sweet, true, pure things with which my heart fills when I speak to thee! Yes, it is God who gives them to me, and I send them to thee. May my letter do thee good! Thou wilt get it on Tuesday. I wrote it by night, in order to have it despatched by the morning mail, and thus save a day. I was in such a hurry to come directly and strengthen thee in the state of weakness and weariness I see thee in. But I do not see it; I guess it from thy letter, and from a few words of Félicité's. Would to God I could see it, could discover what disturbs thee; then I should know on what to lay the balm that I now apply by hazard! Oh, how I long for thy letters! Write to me, speak, explain thyself; let me see thee; let me know what it is thou art suffering, and what makes thee suffer. Some-

times I think that it is nothing but a little of that dark mood that we have at times, and which makes us so sad when it pervades our hearts. One must get rid of it as soon as possible, for it is a poison that spreads rapidly, and would make us mad or brutal. It prevents our desiring anything noble or elevated. I know some one who in this condition cares for no other pleasure than eating ; and in general this person's soul is very independent of the senses. This shows how every passion degrades us ; and defection is a passion that consumes, alas ! many lives. I look upon those whom it possesses as pretty nearly lost. Has some duty to be fulfilled ? Oh, impossible ! They are melancholy men ; ask from them nothing, whether for God or for themselves, except what their mood may allow.

27*th*. — In my solitude to-day I have nothing better to do than to hunt among my papers, to look over my old memoranda, my writings, my former thoughts of various kinds. I saw some that were good, — that is, rational ; some pious, some exaggerated, absurd, like this : " If I dared, I should ask God why I am in this world ? What do I in it ; what have I to do ? I know not. My days pass uselessly by ; hence I do not regret them. . . . *If I could* but do myself

or any one else good for one moment only in the course of the day!" Why, good heavens! nothing was easier; I had only to take a glass of water, and give it to a poor man! This is how depression leads us into extravagance; makes us say: Wherefore life, since life wearies me? Wherefore duties, since they weigh upon me? Wherefore a heart, a soul? Wherefores without end, and we can do nothing, will nothing! We neglect ourselves, weep, are wretched, shut ourselves up; and the devil, who sees us thus alone, comes to divert us with all his seductions. Then, when these are exhausted, suicide still remains. Heavens! what an end, what madness, and how it gains ground every day, even in the country! A young peasant of Bleys, well off, and loved by his parents, killed himself out of melancholy. Everything wearied him, life above all. He was religious, but not enough so to conquer a passion. God alone can give us strength and resolution in this terrible conflict, and, however weak and small we be, with His aid one can at length hold the giant down beneath one's knees. But for that we must pray; pray much, as Jesus Christ has taught us to do, crying, "Our Father!" This filial cry touches the heart of God, and always obtains us some blessing. My friend, I long to see thee pray

like a good child of God's. What would it cost thee? Thy spirit is naturally loving, and what is prayer but love? a love that gushes out from the soul, as water from the fountain. You understand this better than I. M. de Lamennais has said divers things on this subject, which must assuredly have penetrated thy heart if thou hast heard them; but, unfortunately, he has also said other things which will, I fear, have prevented the good effects of the former. What a misfortune, once more; what a misfortune that thou should'st be under the influence of this misguided genius! Poor Maurice! One must not think of this.

27*th*. — I made a mistake in the date yesterday, and anticipated one day. I correct myself; let us not go quicker than time itself, which advances, alas! rapidly enough. Are we not already at the end of the month, which finishes in a fine commotion? At the moment I write, we have thunder, wind, lightning, the castle shaking, torrents of rain like a deluge. I listen to all this from my inundated window, and I cannot write on the sill, as I do every evening. It is a great pity, for it makes a charming desk, overlooking this garden mound, so green, so pretty, so fresh, all perfumed with its acacias.

28*th*. — Our sky to-day is pale and languish-

ing, like a beautiful face after a fever. This languid state has many charms, and the blending of verdure and *débris*, of flowers that open above fallen flowers, of singing birds, and little torrents flowing, this stormy aspect, and this look of May, make up altogether a something unformal, sad and smiling both, that I like. But this is Ascension-day; let us leave earth, and the earth's sky; let us rise higher than our own abode, and follow Jesus Christ whither He has entered in. This is a very beautiful festival, — the festival of detached, free, heavenly souls, which delight themselves beyond the visible, there, whither they are attracted by God.

29*th*. — Never was there a longer storm; it still lasts. For three days the thunder and rain have been going on incessantly. All the trees are bent beneath this deluge; it is sad to see them thus languishing and oppressed in the glorious triumph of their May. We were saying so this evening at the hall window, as we watched the poplars of the Pontet drooping their heads quite mournfully, like some one bending beneath adversity. I pitied them, or very nearly so; whatever appears to suffer seems as if it had a soul.

30*th*. — Rain, always rain. It is weather for composing music or poetry. Every one yawns

as they count the hours that never come to an end. It is an eternity for Papa especially, he who is so fond of out-of-door life and its amusements. There he is, as it were, in prison, turning over from time to time an old history of the Berlin Academy, a very opiate, most drowsy reading, which made me run away the moment I touched the volume. Only think! I stumbled upon the 'Theology of Being.' I shut it up at once. I fancied I was looking down a well, a well without water; a darksome void has always frightened me. There are, however, some profundities that I delight in; as, for instance, the 'Existence of God,' by Fénélon. The impression that book left on me is still as it were present; it afforded me infinite enjoyment, which could not have been the case if I had not in some measure understood it. To feel, we must be touched. I felt therefore . . . I am reasoning in *Salabert* fashion, am I not? But, be it as it may, that reading was good for me; I seemed to know more of God, both by the mind and the heart, in the same way Fénélon did. I should like to have his religious works, those 'Spiritual Letters' especially, in which Fénélon is so elevated, so tender, so loving. I have those of Bossuet, which are my delight; the others are my desire. Since I have got

upon this subject I will just tell thee all my fancies as regards works of piety. I have been for a long time back forming a library, the shelves of which, alas! are still empty. Here it is: first, of Saint Augustine's works, the 'City of God,' his meditations, sermons, soliloquies, and all else within my grasp; the letters of Saint Jerome, his treatises on education for the benefit of the little Marcella; the letters, too, of Saint Gregory of Nazianzen; the poems of Saint Paulinus; the 'Spiritual Field' of Jean Mose; the writings of Saint Theresa, of Louis de Blois; the letters of Saint Bernard, and his *opusculi*, addressed to his sister; the writings of Saint Catherine of Genoa, so esteemed by Leibnitz; Saint Francis de Sales. I will go on with my catalogue by and by; I must now tell my rosary.

[*No date.*] — Since this pause many days have passed, many events occurred at Cayla, which kept me away from my little room. Here I am for a moment, in which thou shalt see my four days, all that time that passed without writing. But no; is it worth while to mark down my time? It is but writing in dust. I don't know why I fancy that it can give thee any pleasure, this rubbish of things, days, and paper. Mimi arrived yesterday with Eliza, to

whom I have given up my little room; that is to say, that I enter it less, read less, think less. I belong to Eliza, and am just going to join her for a walk.

13*th June*. — I return to my forsaken book, and note down therein what has come to me in the course of the day: two beautiful books, the 'Imitation' of Lamennais, and the 'Spiritual Guide' of Louis de Blois. Thanks, Maurice, for these pious presents. They will be two relics for the soul and the heart both, and we will pray for thee every time that we read, Mimi her 'Guide,' and I my 'Imitation.'

18*th*. — M. the Curé has just gone away, leaving me one of thy letters, that he furtively slipped into my hand in the midst of them all. I very quietly *trembled* my thanks, and, guessing what it was, I went out and read thee at my ease in the rabbit-warren. How fast I walked, how I shook, how I burned over that letter in which at last I was to see thee! I have seen you, but I do not feel that I know you; it is only your head that you show me; it is the heart, the soul, their secrets, that which constitutes your life, that I had expected to behold. You only show me your way of thinking. You make me rise, and I wanted to descend, to know thee through and through in thy tastes,

thy moods, thy principles ; in a word, to make a tour of discovery in every chink and cranny of thy nature. I am therefore not satisfied with what you tell me, and yet I find in it reason to bless God, for I expected worse. I shall tell thee all this in my letter, it is useless here ; my reflections would be all ancient history by the time you read them.

19*th*. — Am I not unfortunate ? I wanted to write a letter ; I began it, and could not go on, for want of ideas. My head is empty just now. There are times when I find myself exhausted, when my mind dries up like a fountain ; then it takes to flowing again. Meanwhile, waiting for a fresh water-supply, I admire my turtle-dove, that is cooing away with all its might below my window.

I am going to write to thee privately ; and, to circumvent the inquisitive who may chance to come into my room, I shall have two letters, — one above, one below, — and when any one comes I shall only have to transpose them. What I am telling thee would be understood by no one, with the exception of Mimi, who is in the secret. Papa would be pained at it, and would make himself uneasy about thee. It is better to deceive him, and let him believe that I am writing to Louise, as I told

him. For I really am going to begin my double letter, and to speak in two voices. Now for it!

A wedding is going along the Cordes road; just now they were tolling for a death in that direction. Such is human life. I see the whole of it in my little picture.

12*th*. — We have lost one of our poor people, the lame Annette, she who kissed me so warmly for some grapes I gave her. Poor girl! I hope that she is now praying for us in heaven. She died without thinking of it; or, rather, she thought of it every day, but she was not conscious of the approach of her last hour.

17*th*. — A day of mourning. We have lost my grandmother. This morning Papa entered my room early, came up to my bed, and, taking my hand, pressed it, saying, "Get up, dear." "Why?" Again he pressed my hand: "Get up." "Something is the matter; tell me." "My mother . . ." I understood at once; I had left her dying.

31*st*. — This book, that I forsake and then return to, of what use will it be if I continue it? An idea occurs to me. If I die before thee, I bequeath it to thee. It will be pretty nearly all my property, but this legacy of the heart will surely have some value for thee. I

determine therefore to enrich it, that thou mayest say, "My sister left me all she could." A fine fortune, indeed; a few sadnesses, tears, thoughts, making up almost the whole of the life! If anything better ever occurs in it, it is rare! so rare that one gets transported with it, as I do when something comes to me from Heaven, or from those I love.

For the last fortnight I have had several of these sweet moments. All my friends have written to me about my grandmother, and said many tender and consolatory things on the subject of her death; but God alone can console. To the heart when it is sad, human props, that bend beneath its weight of sadness, will not suffice. This reed must have better supports than other reeds. Oh, how well Jesus has said, "Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden!" It is only there, only in the bosom of God, that we can weep tears that truly relieve us. How happy we are, we who are Christians! We have no sorrows that God does not soothe.

1st August. — This evening my turtle-dove has died, I have no idea of what, for it was cooing away quite lately. Poor little thing, how I regret it! I loved it; it was pure white, and every morning its voice was the first I heard under my window, winter and summer alike.

Was this enjoyment or complaint? I do not know; but it gave me pleasure to hear it. Here is one pleasure less. So it is, each day we lose some delight. I shall place my dove under a rose-bush on the terrace. It seems to me that it will be comfortable there, and that its soul (if soul it has) will repose sweetly in that nest beneath the flowers. I am rather inclined to believe in the souls of animals, and I should even like there to be a little paradise for harmless and gentle ones, like doves, dogs, and lambs. But then, what to do with wolves and other wicked sorts! To damn them goes against me. Hell is only the punishment of unrighteousness, and what unrighteousness does the wolf commit when he eats a lamb? He wants it, and this want, which does not justify the man, justifies the animal, that has not received any law superior to that of instinct. In following its instinct, it is good or bad merely with relation to us; there is no *will*, that is to say, no choice, in brute actions, and consequently neither right nor wrong, neither paradise nor hell. Nevertheless, I can't help regretting paradise, and that there should be no animals in heaven. My God! what is it I am saying? Shall we want anything pertaining to here below to make us blest there above?

2*nd*. — Rain; and one of thy letters. This

letter was confidently expected because of the events that have taken place both here and at Paris. You had heard from the family plans of marriage and tidings of death, and you were bound to inform me what that infernal machine that exploded was, and what came of the explosion. Deaths, calamities, tears! How I pity thee for being upon that volcano, Paris!

3rd. — Nothing.

4th. — I have wanted to speak to thee of thy birth, of my joy when I heard of it, and how I made haste to open that portmanteau where Papa told me he had got thee. I wanted to tell thee all that and many other things, about the baptism and thy early life: but I was sad, afflicted, tearful; and when I weep I do not write, I only pray, — it is all I can do. But now a degree of serenity is returning to me. God has been with me; then came books, and a letter from Louise, — three things that make me happy. When I began to write I was quite sad, and afterwards I felt almost joy, and that I had God within my heart. Oh, my friend, did you but know how sweetly the soul in affliction consoles itself in God! what strength it draws from divine power!

The book — I mean the work which gives me such delight — is Fénélon, that Papa has bought

me. All my life long I had wished to have these 'Spiritual Letters,' so sweet, so heavenly, so adapted to every condition and attitude of the soul. I shall make them my consolation and support now that I am about to lose M. Bories, and that my soul feels itself as it were orphaned. I had asked some substitute from God, and these letters have come to me; accordingly, I look upon them as a gift from Heaven. Thanks to God and to my father.

20*th*. — I have just been hanging around my neck a medal of the blessed Virgin that Louise has sent me as a preservative from the cholera. It is the medal that has worked so many miracles, they say. This is not an article of faith, but it does no harm to believe it. I do therefore believe in the holy medal as in the sacred image of a mother the sight of whom may do one good. I shall throughout life wear on my heart this holy relic of the Virgin and of my friend, and will have faith in it if the cholera comes, — a disease for which there is no human remedy. Let us then have recourse to the miraculous. People do not sufficiently trust to Heaven, and so they tremble. I don't know why, but this advance of the cholera does not affect me. I should not think about it were it not for the prayers ordered by the Archbishop.

Why is this, I wonder? Can it be through indifference? I should be sorry for that. I would be insensible to nothing, not even the plague. Whence comes my security?

21*st*. — Here is another ornament for my little room, — Saint Theresa, that I have been at length able to get framed. I was longing to have this beautiful saint before my eyes, above the table where I say my prayers, where I write, where I read. It will be an inspiration, helping me to pray, love, and suffer well. I shall raise my heart and eyes to her in my prayers and my sadnesses. I begin at once and say, "Look down on me from heaven, blessed Saint Theresa; see me on my knees before your picture, contemplating the features of a lover of Jesus with an earnest desire to have them engraved in me. Obtain for me this holy resemblance, obtain for me something of yourself; lend me your glance to seek for God, your mouth to pray to Him, your heart to love Him. May I obtain your courage in adversity, your meekness in suffering, your constancy in temptation." Saint Theresa suffered for twenty years from disinclination to prayer without letting herself be disheartened. This is of all her triumphs the one that surprises me most. I am far from such constancy, but I like to remember

that when I lost my mother I went, like Saint Theresa, to throw myself at the feet of the Holy Virgin, and pray her to take me for her daughter. This occurred before the Chapel of the Rosary, in the Church of Saint Peter's at Gaillac. I was then thirteen.

23*rd*. — But for the dreams that I had last night I should not write to thee: but I have seen thee, have embraced thee, spoken to thee; and of all this, illusion though it be, I needs must speak, because my heart is touched thereby. Raymond is arrived. Who knows whether he may not be bringing me a letter from thee! I should be very glad to have some private communication, such as thou hast often sent on similar occasions. 'T is one sign of life and tenderness, this dear writing; let us write to each other, then, and do thou write to me. I have just despatched a letter of nine pages to Louise. This would be long, would be endless to any one else; but between us two there can never be enough. When the heart truly loves, it is insatiable. I should dearly like to write to thee in the same way. There is a cloud that passes, such a black one that I can hardly see on my white paper. This reminds me of many a dark thought that sometimes passes thus over the soul.

24*th*. — The morning began pleasantly with a letter from Auguste, who tells me much about you. This good cousin is fond of you; one sees that. I wish with all my heart that this charming plan of travel could get itself accomplished, and that I were one of the party. Oh, to come and see thee in Paris! . . . But no; that would be too charming for this world; let us not think of it. I have half an idea that we are only to meet again in the other world. There is this cholera; no doubt it will come here. I expect it, and put my soul in order as well as I can, so as not to die unprepared, — the only thing to fear; for the misfortune does not lie in quitting life. I do not say this in the sense of one merely tired of living; there are holy desires of death that occur to the Christian soul. Another cloud, which forces me to leave thee. That cloud brought a deluge — thunder, wind, all the hurly-burly of a storm. While it lasted I was running here and there, thinking of my chickens, and warming a shirt for this little boy who has arrived half-drowned; at present everything is calm and going on as usual. The extraordinary does not last long here. My cousin Fontenilles is come to see us; he is to sleep in the little room, my dear nook that does for everything, — an excellent use of human things,

all for all. But thou, my copybook, in with thee; *this is not for the public, this belongs to the intimate, the soul;* THIS IS FOR ONE.

25*th*. — Saint Louis' day; a great festival in France during a long period, but only kept in heaven now that kings are being done away with. Saint Louis, pray for France and for thy descendants; obtain for them the kingdom of Heaven.

26*th*. — How marvellous grace is! To-day I have to admire it in Saint Genès, of whom it made a Christian while he was acting the mysteries of Christianity on the stage. All at once God revealed Himself to his soul, and the comedian became a martyr.

27*th*. — My heart is stirred, penetrated, entirely filled with a letter that I have received this morning from M. de La Morvonnais, in which he speaks to me of Marie, of another world, of his depression, of thee, of death, of all those subjects that interest me so much. This is why these letters give me a delight that I feared to feel too keenly; for all delights are dangerous. But you wished it, and therefore only for love of you I have kept up this correspondence, which will now have many charms; in the first place, those of sympathy. As you had told me was the case, I find that your

friend has nearly the same ideas as my own respecting the religious and the mournful; his soul often weeps and prays like mine.

To-day he tells me that his prayers are lukewarm and wandering, and asks me to plead for him before God. Most assuredly I will, for his soul is dear to me, and this soul suffers, and excites my compassion. I will therefore pour over it the balm of prayer, which. far away as I am, will reach him by way of heaven. At least, I believe it will; blessed faith, which gives me the hope of consoling the afflicted! This is another reason why I enjoy this correspondence; to do good is so sweet! to comfort those that weep is divine! Jesus did this when on earth, and it is from Him I learn it. Yes, my friend, it is from the cross that come the thoughts your friend finds so sweet, so *inexpressibly* tender. Nothing is my own. I feel my aridity, but feel also that God, when He wills, makes an ocean flow over the sandy bed. It is thus with many a simple soul from whence admirable things proceed, because they are in direct relation with God, have no science and no pride. Hence I am losing my taste for books. I say to myself, what can they teach me but what I shall one day know in heaven? Let God be my master and my study! And I

act accordingly, and find it profitable to me. I read little ; I go out little ; I introvert myself. Within, how much gets said, done, felt ; how many things go on there ! Oh, could'st thou see them ! but what were the use of their being seen ? God alone should penetrate into the sanctuary of the soul. To-day my soul abounds with poetry and prayer. I observe that these two streams flow together both in me and in others.

The blind man prays and sings upon his wandering way ; the soldier on the battle-field, the sailor on the seas, the poet over his lyre, the priest before the altar, the child as it begins to speak, the hermit in his cell, the angels in heaven, the saints throughout the earth, all pray and sing : it is only the dead who neither sing nor pray. Poor dead !

28*th*. — Saint Augustine's to-day, — a saint I love so much because he loved so much ; and besides, I bear his name, and I have implored him to give me a portion of his spirit as well. What a beautiful spirit, and how divinely it reveals itself in his 'Confessions !' At every word of that book one feels the love of God penetrate drop by drop into the heart, however hard it be. Why have I not a memory to retain it all ? but unfortunately mine is so evanescent, I might as well read nothing ; it did not use to

be so. The truth is, I am declining, and all my faculties decrease, except that of loving. Love is the soul which dies not ; which goes on growing, soaring like flame. I have had a letter from Louise, from my sweet friend, who always tells me that she loves me. The letter is short, three pages only, because she was hurried, and quite taken up with her sister the countess, who had only just arrived. It was in her arms that Louise wrote me the tender *memento* that quite suffices me to-day. It was the Abbé de Bayne d'Alos that brought it me, on his return from Rayssac.

29*th*. — A beautiful sky, beautiful sun, beautiful day. This is in itself a delight ; for fine weather is rare just now, and I feel it a boon. It is indeed a great boon to have lovely scenery, a pure air, and a radiant sky, — slight images, these, of the celestial abode, — making us think of God ! I shall go this evening to Cahuzac, my dear pilgrimage. Meanwhile I must occupy myself with my soul, and see how it has stood as to its relations with God during the last week. Such a retrospect wonderfully enlightens, instructs, and advances the heart in the knowledge of God and of its own self. Was there not a philosopher who prescribed this mental exercise three times a day to his disciples, and his disciples practised it ? I will do

the same in the school of Jesus, that I may learn to be wise with Christian wisdom.

31*st*. — I spent the whole of yesterday at Cahuzac, and a few hours alone in our grandmother's house. First of all I knelt down on the "Prie-Dieu," where she was in the habit of praying: then I went over her room, — I looked at her chairs, her arm-chair, her furniture all deranged, as it is when one moves; I saw her bed *empty*. I went everywhere where she used to go, and remembered that passage of Bossuet, "The time will come when others will pass where I once was, and they will find me there no more. There is his room, there is his bed, will they say, and of all this nothing remains but my tomb, where it will be said that I am, and *I shall not be there*." Oh, what an idea of our nothingness lies in this absence from the very tomb, in this so rapid dispersion of our dust in the vaults of death! To-morrow I change, and go to Cahuzac, on account of some repairs in the house, which will detain me some days. These will be quite unique days, and I mean to note them down, and to take my Journal with me. I am going now to write to Antoinette, my angel friend.

Some hours have passed, and now I have written to Antoinette and Irène, and yet I had

nothing, next to nothing, to tell them. My life affords but little, or Cayla either, because everything is so quiet there. But then heart-communications are sweet, and I am easily led into them. Besides, they do me good, and relieve my soul of its sadness. When waters begin to flow, they set out with foam on their surface, and grow clear on their way. For me, my way lies in God — or in a friend — but especially in God; there I hollow myself out a channel, and find calm therein.

1*st September.* — Here I am at Cahuzac in another little room, leaning on my elbow on the small table where I write. Everywhere I must have tables and paper, because everywhere my thoughts follow me, and want to pour themselves out for thee, my friend. I have sometimes the idea that thou wilt find a certain charm in them, and this idea encourages and leads me on; but for this, my heart would very often remain closed, through indolence or indifference, to whatever is mine.

I have sometimes childlike pleasures; as, for instance, that of coming for a few days here. You could not imagine how cheerfully I came to take possession of this deserted house. The fact is, you see, that I find myself alone — quite alone — in a place that favours meditation. I

hear the passers-by without even disturbing myself; I am at the foot of the church; I can catch the very last vibration of the bell which rings in noon, or the Angelus, and I listen to it as to a harp. Then I can go and pray, can confess when I will; this is enough for a few days of happiness, of a happiness *my very own*. Papa will come and see me this afternoon. I enjoy this visit as though we had been separated for a long time.

The devil tempted me just now in a little closet, where I stumbled upon some romances. Read a word or two, I said to myself; let's just look at this, look at that; but the titles were very displeasing to me. There were 'Love Letters of a Nun,' 'The General Confession of a Rake,' and other histories of that character. Fie upon the very idea of my reading such trash! I am no longer tempted now, and am only going to remove those books from the closet, or rather to throw them into the fire.

22*nd*. — Ever since I returned from Cahuzac, my confidant has been sleeping in a corner, and would sleep there still, were this not the 22nd of September, the day of Saint Maurice, and thy name-day, which has afforded me a degree of joy, and re-opened my heart to the pleasure of writing to thee and leaving some memorials here.

I remember that on the same day last year I also wrote to thee, and spoke about thy festival. I was happy: I saw *to-day*, and thee, — hoping then to embrace thee on Saint Maurice's; and there thou art a hundred leagues off! My God! how ill we reckon, and how little ought we to reckon upon anything in life!

Monsieur the Curé and his sister have come to keep thy festival, and drink thy health. But what is better is that Monsieur the Curé remembered thee at mass, and that Françoise also prayed for you. May Saint Maurice protect thee, and make thee strong in the conflicts of life! Will you bring me back his image that I gave you?

27th. — [1] . . .

[*No date.*] — You must not be surprised at the gaps in this Journal, not even at an entire abandonment of it. I do not care much for writing down what passes, sometimes not at all, unless the idea of giving you pleasure comes across me. Sometimes it puts the pen in my hand and dictates to me interminably. But, my friend, wilt thou indeed ever read me? Would it be well for thee to see me thus, to see down to the very depths of my soul? This doubt keeps me back, so that I do not say much, or

[1] Here a whole page is effaced.

rather say nothing for whole months. To-day, a Sunday morning in my little room, before my cross and my Saint Theresa, my soul has felt calm ; and therefore I thought I should not do you harm, and give myself up once more to the charm of a confidential outpouring. Do not let us dwell on the past ; let us leave a blank.

[*19th November.*] — To-day, November 19, I have taken up my poor forsaken book, already gnawed by rats, and the idea has occurred to me of returning to it and continuing to write. This writing gives me pleasure, diverts me in my solitude ; but I have often neglected it, and I shall neglect it again. Nevertheless, I will fill my page to-day, and to-morrow we shall see. I find myself changed. My books, my poems, my birds, that I was so fond of, all these used to occupy my heart and head, and now . . . No, I am not doing right, and I am not happy since the renunciation of the affections of my life ; are not they sufficiently innocent for me to permit myself the whole of them ? My God ! the recluses of the Thebaid occupied themselves in the same way. I see them work, read, pray, write ; some of them singing, others making mats and baskets, all working for God, who blessed the labour of each. In like manner I will offer Him my days and everything that is

to fill them, whether work or prayers, whether writing or thoughts, not excepting this little manuscript book that I also desire to see blest.

[*No date.*] — I have passed the day in complete solitude, alone, quite alone; Papa is at the Cordes fair, Eran dining at the priest's house, Mimi at Gaillac. They are all dispersed, and I for my part have thought much, and realized what a longer dispersion would be; and that, alas! will come one day. But I am wrong in dwelling upon gloomy thoughts that do me so much harm. These things are to the soul what clouds are to the eyes.

30*th.* — Oh, my God, more tears! In vain we determine not to afflict ourselves; every day brings some affliction, some loss. Here we are now mourning that poor cousin De Thézac, who was so fond of us. Oh, no doubt he is better off now than we; he must be in heaven, for he suffered much. His patience was admirable, both throughout his life of pain and just now in his last trials. Mimi, whom I was expecting, was not able to come; she remained with the sufferer, helping him, exhorting him in his last moments, speaking to him of heaven.

Oh, how well Mimi knows to speak on these subjects, and how I should wish to have her by my side when I was dying! Papa is gone to

see the bereaved family, and I am alone in my room, with my thoughts in mourning, and the thousand voices of the wind that, like an organ, moans for the dead. One should find this accompaniment good for praying, for writing; but what should I write? A little sleep will be better. The repose of the body passes over into the soul. I am therefore going to bed, after a *De profundis* for the dead, and a remembrance of thee before God. May He grant thee a good night! I never go to sleep without occupying myself about thy rest. Who knows, I say to myself, if Maurice is as comfortable as he would be here, where I should see to the making of his bed? Who knows whether he may not be cold? Who knows? . . . and a thousand other too tender tendernesses.

1*st December.* — I am thinking of the grave that opens this morning at Gaillac to swallow up those human remains until God shall revive them. This is the fate of us all; we must be thrown into the earth, must decay in the furrows of death before we can attain to flowering-time; but then, how happy we shall be to live, and even to have lived! Immortality will make us feel the full value of life, and all that we owe to God for having drawn us out of nothingness. This is a blessing of which we think but little

and enjoy almost unconsciously ; for often life gives no pleasure. But what matters that to the Christian ? Through tears and rejoicings alike, he ever walks towards heaven ; his goal is there, what he meets on the way can hardly turn him aside. Do you think that, if I were running to you, a flower in my path, or a thorn in my foot, would have power to stop me ?

Here I am at the evening of a day filled with a myriad of thoughts, and with a variety of things of which I am taking account beside my bedroom fire, by the light of a little lamp, now my only companion at night. But for the misfortune that has taken place at Gaillac, I should have Mimi by my side, and we should chat, and I should tell to her herself what I should but say ill to this dumb confidant.

2nd. — Nothing interesting but the arrival of a little dog, who is to be Lion's substitute with the flock. He is handsome and very caressing ; I like him and am trying to find a name for him. It would be Polydor in remembrance of the dog of La Chênaie ; but for a shepherd dog it is a pretentious name ; Battle will be more appropriate to the champion of the flock.

The air is mild this morning, the birds sing as in spring, and some sunshine visits my little room. I like it thus, and enjoy myself as much

in it as in the most beautiful place in the world, all solitary as it is. This is because I make of it just what I will, — a drawing-room, a church, an academy. When I like I am in it with Lamartine, Châteaubriand, Fénélon ; a crowd of great minds surrounds me ; next come saints, — Saint Theresa, Saint Louis, the patron of my friend Louise, — and a little image of the Annunciation, in which I contemplate a gracious mystery and God's purest creatures, the angel and the Virgin. This ought to be enough to satisfy me here, and to wall up my door against all that may be seen elsewhere. But no, I could not keep to it long ; nay, at the least word of letters or news, I should leave it to go and read or listen, especially today that I am expecting something from Mimi and from you. You neglect me : it is a month and more since you have written to me. I shall find this a long day ; in order to cut it short I am going to write to Louise. I have had two letters from her ; two treasures, two little marvels of wit and tenderness. Oh, what letters ! all these exquisite things are for me, and yet I feel sad ! What would'st thou have, then, poor heart ?

3*rd*. — A letter from Mimi ! How much happiness a letter brings, and what a charm there is in hearing from those who are away, and whom

we cannot see for a long time to come! This voice of the heart brings them near, and seems to say to you, Here they are; in these pages you see their soul and their love, their thoughts, their actions; their whole being is contained therein; it is the envelope only that is wanting to you. And this consoles wonderfully for absence. I would fain wish, should you ever read this, to *persuade* thee of the profound delight I receive from thy letters, and of my corresponding sorrow when they do not arrive. No doubt you will write to me oftener in future.

4th. — A letter from Mimi, a letter from Louise; Paul is arrived; joy, joy, joy! I have not time to write to thee.

5th. — In the course of the day, in a few hours, I shall be at Gaillac, far from here, far from Papa, from my little room, from all that makes my life. Not a moment to write in. With what regret I go; but then I am to join Mimi, and be with her for a day, and that consoles me.

Wilt thou accept it, my friend, this book, written during the last two years? It is old indeed, but the things of the heart are eternal. Time, methinks, in no way affects them; I there-

fore give thee up these, after a few corrections, a few lines erased. When we go back over the past, we must needs efface; we find so many errors in it! We used to even talk nonsense with thee once upon a time as we walked together.

III.

1836.

I CHANGE the form of my Journal, to make it more convenient for my pocket, into which I mean to put it when I go from home. In this way we shall find in it whatever chances to strike me when I go out, whether into the world or into the country. Upon such occasions I see, hear, feel, think, a thousand things that please, displease, surprise me, and that I should like to fix somewhere or other. This would be useful, showing me in some degree what I am when away from home, when mixing with the world, its conversations and amusements, and all else to which I am unaccustomed. I am conscious of something unwonted going on within me at these times; thoughts and feelings before unknown occur to me, and I feel that I am not like others, nor like what I am here. When thus in this unusual mood I am aware of it, indeed, but fail to take any particular note of it, and yet it would be well to see whither it leads me. I shall revert

to this subject; but now I have something even better to do than to write: I am going to pray. Oh, how I love prayer!

I would that all the world knew how to pray! I would that children, and those who are old; that the poor, the afflicted, the diseased in body and mind, — that all who live and suffer could feel the balm of prayer! But I cannot speak of these things. What should be said of them is ineffable.

Our new Curé came to see us to-day. He is a mild, cheerful man, wearing on his countenance the impress of a beautiful soul. I should think he was clever, but he does not let it appear. His conversation is most ordinary, without any characteristic features, any bright sallies, merely going on in a plain way from one thing to another. But, however, I observe that he answers correctly, and speaks *à propos*. He is a simple pastor of simple souls; quite full of God, and nothing more.

11*th March*. — I have a very happy heart to-day. Eran is gone to confess. I hope much from this confession to the gentle Curé, who knows so well how to speak of God's mercy. And then to-day is Papa's birthday too.

12*th*. — I was admiring just now a little landscape, presented by my room, as it was being

illuminated with the rising sun. How pretty it was! Never did I see a more beautiful effect of light on the paper, thrown through painted trees. It was diaphanous, transparent. It was almost wasted on my eyes; it ought to have been seen by a painter. And yet does not God create the *beautiful* for everybody? All our birds were singing this morning while I was at my prayers. This accompaniment pleases me, though it distracts me a little. I stop to listen; then I begin again, thinking that the birds and I are alike singing a hymn to God, and that, perhaps, those little creatures sing better than I. But the charm of prayer, the charm of communion with God, — they cannot enjoy that; one must have a soul to feel it. This happiness that the birds have not is mine. It is only nine o'clock, and I have already known joy and sorrow. How little time is needed for that! The joy comes from the sun, the mild air, the song of birds, — all delights to me, — as well as from a letter of Mimi's (who is now at Gaillac), in which she tells me of Madame Vialar, who has seen thee, and of other cheerful things. But then in the midst of all this I learn the departure of M. Bories, of that kind and excellent father of my soul. Oh, how I regret him! What a loss I shall have in this good guide of my conscience, my heart, my

spirit, my whole self; committed to his care by God, and intrusted to him by me with such full confidence! I am sad with an internal sadness, which makes my soul weep. My God, in this my desert, to whom can I have recourse? Who will sustain me in my spiritual languor; who will lead me to the great sacrifice? It is in this especially that I regret M. Bories. He knows what God has put into my heart; I needed his strength to follow Him. Our new Curé cannot possibly replace him. He is so young, he seems so inexperienced, so undecided! Firmness is required to snatch a soul from out the world, and to uphold it against the assaults of flesh and blood. It is Saturday, the day of pilgrimage to Cahuzac. I am going thither; perhaps I shall return thence tranquillised. God has invariably granted me some blessing in that chapel, where I have left so many miseries behind.

I was not mistaken in thinking that I should return tranquillised. M. Bories is not going. How happy I am, and how I have thanked God for this favour! It is a very great one for me to retain this good father, this good guide, this *chosen* of God for my soul, according to the expression of Saint François de Sales. I have just been writing off these tidings to Mimi. I shall not say elsewhere what I say here; it might

be taken ill, or not understood. The world does not know the value of a confessor, of the man who is the friend of the soul, its most intimate confidant, its physician, its master, its light; the man who binds and looses us, who gives us peace, who opens to us heaven, to whom we speak on our knees, calling him our father, as we do God, since, in fact, faith does truly make him God and Father. Woe to me if, when I am at his feet, I see anything but Jesus Christ listening to the Magdalen, and forgiving her much, because she loves much! Confession is an expansion of repentance into love. It is a very sweet thing, a great happiness for the Christian soul, a great benefit, and ever greater in proportion as we enjoy it more, and as the heart of the priest to which we pour out our tears resembles the Divine heart *that has so loved us.* This it is that attaches me to M. Bories. Thou wilt understand me.

On my way to Cahuzac I wanted to see a poor sick woman who lives beyond the Vère. It was she of the ballad of the 'Rose-tree,' which I think I related to thee. My God, what wretchedness! On entering I saw a low bed, from which a death's head, or nearly so, raised itself. However, she knew me. I went nearer, that I might speak to her, and I discovered

water, a regular puddle, beside that bed; all sorts of filth, rendered liquid by the rain, which falls through the miserable roof, and by the fountain that lurks below that miserable bed. It was all infection, wretchedness, rotten rags, vermin. To have to live there! Poor creature! She was without fire, without bread, without water to drink, lying upon some hemp and potatoes that she kept under her to preserve them from the frost. A woman who followed us removed her from that dunghill, another brought in some fagots. We made her a fire, and put her to sit on a *sélou;* and, as I was tired, I seated myself beside her on the unused fagots. I spoke to her of the good God; nothing more easy than to get listened to by the poor, the unhappy, the forsaken, when we speak to them of heaven. This is because there is nothing in their hearts which prevents them from listening. Accordingly, how easy it is to console them, to reconcile them to death! The ineffable peace of their souls might well make us envy them. This sick woman of ours is *happy*, and nothing is more surprising than to meet with happiness in such a creature and in such a dwelling. It is a thousand times worse than a pigsty. I did not see a place to lay down my shawl without dirtying it; and, as it was in my way, I flung it on the branches

of a willow before the door. For all that there was on it . . .

14*th*. — A child's visit cut my story short yesterday. I am as fond of children as of the aged poor. One of these children was very taking, quick, lively, inquisitive. He wanted to see and know everything. He watched me writing, and took the sand for pepper, with which I was supposed to be preparing my paper. Then he made me take down my guitar from the wall, to see what it was. He placed his little hand on the strings, and was enchanted to hear them sing. *Quès aco qui canto aqui?* The wind, which whistled loudly through the window, also surprised him. In short, my room was an enchanted place in his eyes, a thing he will long remember, as I should, if I had seen the Palace of Armida. My crucifix, my Saint Theresa, and the other drawings I have in my room, delighted him. He wanted both to see and to hold everything, and his little head kept turning like a little mill. I watched him with infinite pleasure, enchanted on my side with all these charms of childhood. What must a mother feel for these lovable creatures!

After having given the little Antoine all that he wished, I asked him for a curl of his hair, offering him one of mine in exchange. He

looked at me with some astonishment. "No," said he; "mine are prettier." He was quite right; hair thirty years old is very ugly by the side of his fair curls. I obtained, therefore, nothing but a kiss. They are sweet things, these child's kisses; it seems to me as though a lily had rested on my cheek.

Yesterday this visit began my day. I have nothing pleasanter to record of to-day, so I leave it blank. All my time has been spent in household occupations, in business; no reading, no writing; a quiet material day. Now that I am all alone in my little room, I should like to read, should like to write a great deal. I don't know about what, but I am in the vein for writing. This would be a good time for poetry, and I am sorry to have none in progress. Shall I begin some? No; it is too late. Night is made for sleep, unless one were Philomel; and, besides, even if I did begin anything, to-morrow perhaps I should leave it to the rats. Reflection soon plunges me to the bottom of all things, and I see nothingness in all, if God be not found there.

20*th*. — A little gap. I jump from the 14th to the 20th. I find so little to say about my days, as like the one to the other as drops of water, that I say nothing. It really is not

worth while to spend ink and time in recording them, and I should, perhaps, be doing better in occupying myself with other things. But then, again, I feel the want of writing and of a confidant continually. I speak at will to this little book. I tell it everything, — thoughts, pains, pleasures, emotions, — everything, in short (except what can only be said to God), and even then I grudge what remains unspoken. But that I think I should do ill in revealing, and conscience interposes between the pen and the paper. Then I am silent. If this surprises thee, my friend, knowing the life I lead, remember that Mary the Egyptian was greatly tormented in her solitude. There are evil spirits scattered abroad in the air.

To-day, and, indeed, for some time back, I am calm, enjoy peace of heart and head; a state of grace for which I bless God. My window is open; how tranquil everything is! All the little sounds from without reach me. I love that of the brook. Adieu! I hear a church clock at present, and ours is answering it. This sounding of the hours far away, and in the hall, assumes by night a somewhat mysterious character. I think of the Trappists who awake to pray, of the sick who count hour after hour in suffering, of the afflicted who weep, of the dead

who sleep frozen in their beds. Oh, what solemn thoughts night brings! I do not think that the wicked, the impious, the sceptical, are as perverse by night as by day. A gentleman who doubts on many subjects has often told me that in the night time he always believes in hell. This is apparently because in the day external objects dissipate us, and divert the mind from the truth. But what am I about to say? I had such pleasant things to speak of. This evening I have received thy ribbon, the net, the little box, with the beautiful pin, and the pretty little note. All these I have touched, tried on, examined, and put by in my heart. Thanks! thanks! Thou art anxious that I should sleep. I tear myself hence. Why sleep instead of writing?

22*nd*. — Yesterday passed away without my being able to say anything to thee on account of occupations, of those household arrangements, those domestic occurrences which take away all my time, and all myself, except the heart, which rises above them, and goes off in the direction that it loves. It is now here, now there; at Paris, at Alby, where Mimi is; in the mountains, sometimes in heaven, or in a church; in short, where I will; for I am free in the midst of my incumbrances, and feel the

truth of what the 'Imitation' says, that one may pass without care through the cares of life. But often these cares weigh on the soul, fatigue it, vex it, and then it is that it yearns for solitude. Oh, the blessed condition in which one may occupy one's self solely with the one thing needful! in which, at least, material cares only occupy one slightly, and do not take up the greater part of one's time. Now, here am I, who have had to spend the whole day long in the kitchen, my hands busy about the stoves, and in the *oulos*, on account of forty diggers, or joiners, or I know not what.

Oh, how much better I should like to have been here with a book or a pen! I should have written to thee, should have told thee how grateful thy missives were to me, and I know not what beside; that would have been far pleasanter than plates of soup. But why complain, and thus lose the merit of self-denial? Let me make my soup with a good will; the saints smiled at everything, and we are told that Saint Catherine of Sienna used to take much delight in cooking, and to find that it gave her a great deal to meditate upon. I should think so; if it were only the sight of the fire and the little burns one gets, which make one think of purgatory.

7th April. — Many days have passed since I put down anything here; the holy week, the great festival of Easter, all those solemnities that keep the soul far away from earth. I have hardly remained here at all except for meals. Monday I was at Cahuzac, and Tuesday too, detained there by the rain; Wednesday I spent at Andillac, preparing the chapel for Holy Thursday, with Monsieur the Curé and the little Virginie.

A gap of several days. I find myself now arrived at a torn page; an accident that shall not prevent me from writing. I know besides that a similar thing often happens to the pages of the heart. Shall I tell thee why I keep my Journal so little consecutively? It is because I am taken up with a thousand things which fill all my time with duties or occupation. Now this writing is only a relaxation, spare moments that I give thee when I can, at night, in the morning, at any hour; for every hour one can converse when it is with the heart one speaks. A fly, the slamming of a door, a thought that strikes, what not, — innumerable things that one sees, touches, feels, might lead me to write volumes. Last evening I was reading Bernardin; the first volume of his 'Études,' beginning

with a strawberry-plant, that strawberry-plant which he describes with so much charm, brilliancy, and feeling; which might, he says, prompt numberless volumes, the study of which would suffice to fill the life of the most learned naturalist, because of its relation with all the kingdoms of nature. My friend, I am this strawberry-plant, in relation with earth, air, heaven, with the birds, with so many things invisible and visible, that I should never have done if I began to describe myself; to say nothing of what lives in the folds of the heart, like those insects which lodge in the recesses of a leaf: all this, my friend, what a volume it would make!

Here is a little creature travelling on under my pen not bigger than the dot over an *i*. Who knows where it is going to, what it lives upon, and whether it has not some anxiety on its mind? who knows whether it may not be looking for some Paris where it has a brother? It goes very fast. I pause to watch its way; there it is beyond this page; how far it has got! I hardly see it, I see it no more! A good journey to thee, little creature; may God conduct thee whither thou would'st go! Shall we ever meet again? Have I frightened thee? I am, no doubt, so large in thy eyes; but per-

haps, for that very reason, I escape thee like an immensity. My little insect might lead me very far; I stop at and rest in this thought, that thus I too am in the eyes of God a little, an infinitely little creature that He loves.

Every evening I read some of Lamartine's 'Harmonies.' I learn bits of them by heart, and this study charms me and causes a something to spring up in my soul which transports me far from the book, which drops from my hand, — far from those who speak around me; I find myself then where dwell those *spirits that balance the stars over our heads and live on fire as we do on air.*

I shall always be sorry not to have written my 'Infantines;' but to do so, I should have required to be as quiet in my own room as a bee in its hive. Sometimes I have found myself wishing to be in prison in order to give myself up to study and poetry. Oh, what enjoyment to be free from distraction, with God and with one's self, — with that in us which thinks, feels, loves, and suffers.

15*th*. — We have M. Bories here to-day, our Curé, the Faciens, and some other people. I leave them all playing games, and steal away to speak to thee for a moment about my day. It has been one of those that I take note of,

that charm me by a beautiful sky and welcome events. In the first place, while rising I received a letter from our friend in Brittany, whom I had believed dead. What pleasure I received from that handwriting, those expressions of pure attachment, that expansiveness of a sad and pious spirit! Poor friend! in what a state of dejection I find him. I would fain console him, do him good. He speaks of poetry as a balm; I must send him some. I am very busy, but the care of the sick takes precedence of all else. The good God blesses this good work. Let us then see what is left of poetry within me. I am afraid it must have all gone out, so long have I left it to die. Nothing but this poor sufferer would have been capable of rekindling it. I already feel a something reviving within which will soon gush out. I got this letter from the hands of Pouffé, who looked to me like one of those dwarfs one reads of charged with secret embassies to castles. A "thank you" to my humpback — and then I am on the hill-side of Sept-Fonts, reading my beautiful letter! There I mused over these words coming from the ocean shore to the Cayla woods; upon that stranger soul speaking to mine as a sister would to a sister; upon what brought about our correspondence,

upon Brittany, La Chênaie and its distinguished recluse, upon thee, poor Marie, and her grave. There I checked myself by a pious thought: that I ought to pray for her; and I prayed. Then as I went away I gathered some flowers for our altar to the Virgin, and listened to the nightingale, equally interpenetrated with these sad thoughts, and with the laughing nature around, — perpetual contrast, alas! of human things.

[*No date.*] — While carrying on some calculations just now, I wanted to know the number of my minutes. It is awful, — 168 millions and some thousands.[1] Already so much time in my life! I can better understand its whole rapidity when I measure it thus out by degrees. The tarn does not more swiftly accumulate the sand on its banks. My God! what have we done with these moments that Thou also art one day to number? Will there be found any that count with regard to eternal life? will there be found many such? will there be found a single one? *Si observaveris, Domine, Domine, quis sustinebit?*

This examination of time makes the soul that engages in it tremble, however short a space it may have lived, for God will judge us differently

[1] She makes a mistake, and puts a zero too much; but this is scarce worth remarking.

to the flowers of the field. I could never understand the security of those who have nothing to depend upon in appearing before God, except good conduct in human relations, as though all our duties were included within the narrow circle of this world. To be a good father, good son, good citizen, good brother, does not suffice to make us enter heaven. God requires other merits than these sweet heart-virtues from one whom He designs to crown with a glorious eternity.

IV.

1st May, 1837.

IT is here, my friend, that I intend to return to that intimate correspondence which pleases and is necessary to us: to thee in the world, to me in my solitude. I am sorry not to have continued it, now that I have read your letter, in which you tell me why it was you did not reply. I was afraid of wearying you by the details of my life, and I see that it was quite otherwise. No more anxiety, then, on that head; no more doubts about thy affection or anything else in thy truly fraternal heart. It was I that was wrong: so much the better; I was afraid it was you. Let us, then, in all joy and freedom, resume our conversation — that secret, confidential, strictly private intercourse, which stops short at the least sound, the least glance. The heart does not approve of being overheard in its confidences. You are right to say that I have to plot and contrive a little in writing my books; I have indeed read some parts of them to Papa, but not all. The good father might, perhaps, be made a little anxious by what I say,

by what sometimes crosses my soul; an air of sadness would seem to him a sorrow. Let us hide these little clouds from him: it is not well that he should see them, or know anything of me but my calm, serene side. A daughter should be so sweet a thing to a father! We ought to be with regard to parents much what the angels are to God. It is different between brothers and sisters: here there is less respect and more freedom. For thee, then, the course of my heart and life just as it occurs.

2*nd.* — Two letters from Louise, graceful, tender, but sad. My poor friend is surrounded by deaths, and mourns a neighbour, the mother of Mélanie, of whom I have, I think, written to you. She is the poor mountaineer who has been taken out of the fields to be dressed like a young lady, and brought up at Toulouse, where she sees the ladies of Villèle. Her education takes well, and the young lady is being most successfully engrafted on the rustic. There will be two lives in her life. She interests me, especially now that the poor orphan is weeping for her mother, and grieving in her grand saloons that she could not have been beside that poor mother's bed. Louise tells me that she will not return to Rayssac, where she has no longer any ties, but will go into a convent. That is the

true home of sad spirits, of such as are strangers in the world, or who are timid, and take shelter there as in a dovecot.

3rd. — The nightingale sings, the sky is clear, — both novelties this late spring. This might well give rise to a word or two, but I leave thee for useful avocations. This is only a pastime; for a woman a pen is but the heart's plaything. With you men it is different.

4th. — Nothing but the date. I have not been able to write, having spent the day at Cahuzac, — a poor spot, which, moreover, gives but little to say.

5th. — Rain, cold wind, winter sky; the nightingale singing from time to time below dead leaves. Sad this, in the month of May! Accordingly, I am internally sad in spite of myself. I regret that my soul should be so much affected by the state of the atmosphere and the seasons, that like a flower it should thus close against the cold and open to the sun. I do not understand it; but so it must be, I suppose, so long as it is enclosed in this poor earthen vessel of a body. To amuse me, I have been turning over Lamartine, that loved poet. I am fond of the Hymn to the Nightingale, and of many other of his 'Harmonies;' but how far removed this is from the effect produced upon me by his 'Méd-

itations!' What transports, ecstasies, then, to be sure! I was sixteen: how glorious it was! Time changes many things. The great poet no longer thrills my heart; to-day he has even failed to amuse me.

Let us try something else, then, for we must not tolerate this dejection which gnaws the soul. I compare it to those little worms which lodge themselves in the wood of chairs and furniture generally, which I sometimes hear crack in my room, when they are at work reducing their abode to powder. What, then, shall I do? for it is not good for me to write and to pour out mere turbidity. Let the vessel settle first, and then the water may flow — not before. I throw away books and pens; I know something more effectual; I have made proof of it a hundred times. It is prayer — prayer that calms me. When, in the presence of God, I say to my soul, "Why art thou sorrowful, and why art thou disquieted within me?" something — I know not what — responds, and gradually calms it down like a crying child when it sees its mother. This is because the Divine compassion and tenderness are indeed quite maternal towards us.

6th. — John of Damascus had been forbidden to write to any one, and, because he had made

some verses for a friend, he was expelled from his convent. This seemed to me very severe; but how much wisdom one descries in it, when, the saint being pardoned, after much supplication and humility, we see him ordered to write and to employ his talents in combating the enemies of Jesus Christ! He was considered strong enough to enter the arena so soon as he was stripped of pride. He wrote against the iconoclasts. Oh, if many distinguished writers had but begun by a lesson of humility, they would not have made so many errors or so many books. Pride gives birth to numbers: hence see the fruits they produce. Into how many errors the erring lead us!

But this is too extensive a subject for me, this chapter of the science of evil. I would rather record that I have been sewing a sheet, and have sewn several things into my seam. A sheet is favourable to meditation: how many it is destined to cover, and what different kinds of slumber — perhaps that of the grave! Who knows whether it may not be my winding-sheet? if these stitches of mine may not be unstitched by the worms? Meanwhile Papa was telling me that he had, unknown to me, sent a poem of mine to Rayssac, and I have seen the letter in which M. de Bayne spoke of it, telling him

that it was good. I was beginning to feel a degree of vanity, but it dropped into my seam. And now I say to myself that the thought of death is good for preserving us from sin: it moderates joy, tempers sadness, makes us regard the passing as already past. I find some excellent meditations on this subject in a book that I have just been getting myself, the 'Retreat' of Father Judde. How I delight in this book, and how much obliged I am to the one who introduced it to me!

7th. — I don't know what came to turn me away yesterday, when I wanted to tell thee of my little library, of the books I have, and those I should like to have. I want Saint Theresa, those most spiritual of pious letters. I saw them in the possession of a servant, poor girl! But who knows? perhaps she can comprehend them better than I. Holy things come within the reach of the heart and of every pious intellect. I have very often observed this, and that a person who seems simple and ignorant in the eyes of the world is marvellously well-versed in intellectual matters and in the things of God. I know many clever people who are stupid here: two gentlemen, for instance, who would not allow that God was good, because He gave us restraining laws, because there was a hell.

They considered the observance of fasting and the belief in original sin absurd, and the veneration of images thoroughly ridiculous. Poor people! how many such there are who pretend to be wise on sacred subjects, holy hieroglyphics that they read without understanding and then call follies!

Our country people are actually getting as bad; one of them quoted the Council of Trent to our Curé, in a case where his learning ill became him. To venture to interpret the Councils, and not say the *Pater*, how lamentable! This is to what science leads in our country districts — the science of the alphabet; for it is because it knows how to read that the people believes itself learned. Mounted on its pedestal of pride, it meddles with the highest matters, and considers as within its reach what it ought to contemplate on its knees. It is bent on seeing, comprehending, grasping, and walks boldly on to unbelief. It requires to have its faith proved to it now-a-days; whereas formerly it believed everything. Our peasants have lost much by coming into contact with books; and what have they gained but an additional ignorance — that of their duty? One cannot but grieve over these poor people. It would be better that they should not know how to read,

unless they were at the same time taught what reading was profitable. In the mountains at Rayssac they all read; but then it is the catechism, missals, or devotional books. That is the proper end of schools, and the thing that should be taught in them is religion, the making good Christians. At Andillac and elsewhere they learn to write their names, and say *Qué sony sapian!*

But this digression has led me far from the books I was speaking of. My collection grows: every now and then I get myself something. I brought back from Alby the new 'Month of Mary,' by Abbé Le Guillou, — a sweet, tender book, all full of flowers and devotion. I read some of it every morning. We keep the month of Mary in our room before a beautiful image of the Virgin that Françoise has given to Mimi. Above it there is a framed Christ which belonged to our grandmother; higher up Saint Theresa, and higher up still that little picture of the Annunciation that you are familiar with; so that the eye follows a whole heavenly series as soon as it is raised and fixed. It is a ladder that leads to heaven.

5*th*. — What have I to tell thee now? that it rains, that the sky positively refuses to smile on us. May will pass away, I fear, without sun,

without flowers, without verdure. Our woods are bare and dry, as in winter. The nightingale sometimes sings in them in a melancholy kind of way, and I pity him for having no shelter. It is calamitous weather: everything suffers. The air is unwholesome: one hears tell of nothing but the dead and the dying. The influenza makes sad ravages: it is another cholera, which almost decimates the population in certain places. At Toulouse as many as sixty people have died in a day. Here nothing has befallen either us or our servants: happy that we are to be so far from towns and their infection! If we must perforce go without many things, those that we do enjoy are very sweet, and I bless God for them every day; every day consider myself happy to have woods, streams, meadows, sheep, hens that lay, — to live, in short, in my pretty, tranquil Cayla, with a family that loves me. What is there sweeter in the world?

Nothing, indeed, is wanting to us but thee, dear absent member, for which the body pines. When shall we have thee? Nothing seems to shape itself for this, and so we shall have to spend our lives without meeting! This is sad; but let us resign ourselves to whatever God wills or permits. One day we shall know everything; one day I shall find out why we

were separated, we two, who would fain have been together. Let us draw near, my friend — draw near, at least in heart and thought, by writing to each other. These communications are very sweet; these outbursts relieve, nay, purify, the soul, just as the running of water carries away its mud.

As for me, I am better whenever I have allowed myself to flow out here. I say here, because I just note down my innermost, without being over-particular as to what it may be, sometimes even without knowing it. There are times when what goes on within me is a mystery to myself, — ignorance this, doubtless, of human nature. I have seen so little, known so little, whether of good or evil! But for all that I am not a child. I am very fond of writing to Louise, but it is not the same as to thee; besides, my letters to her are seen, and the heart is not a book one likes to throw open to the public. Thanks, then, for liking my correspondence, for giving me the innocent sisterly delight of telling thee very often that I love thee with that vivid, tender, pure affection which springs from charity. It is thus that we truly love each other; thus that Jesus Christ has loved us, and wills that we should love our brethren.

9th — A day spent in spreading out a large

wash, leaves little to say; and yet it is rather pretty, too, to lay out white linen on the grass, or to see it float on lines. One may fancy one's self Homer's Nausicaa, or one of those Biblical princesses who washed their brothers' tunics. We have a basin at Moulinasse that you have not seen, sufficiently large and full of water, which embellishes that hollow, and attracts the birds, who like a cool place to sing in.

Our Cayla is very much changed, and changes every day. You will no longer see the white pigeon-house on the hill-side, nor the little terrace-door, nor the corridor and the *fenestroun*, where we used to measure our respective heights when we were children. All these have disappeared and made room for large windows and large rooms. These new things are prettier; but why is it that I regret the old, and keep replacing in memory the doors removed, the stones fallen? My feet even cannot accustom themselves to the new steps; they go on with their old habits, and trip and stumble where they have not trod when little feet. Whose will be the first coffin that will pass through these new doors? Whether ancient or modern, all doors have space enough for that, as every nest has its aperture. This it is which disenchants us of these dwellings of a day, and makes us lift

our eyes to that house not made by human hands.

A letter from Marie has just reached us. I always note a letter as I do the arrival of a friend. Marie's are charming, quite full of news and the little things of the day. This morning she announced to us the arrival of M. Vialar, the African, and that of an Arab prince, — striking facts in this country, and for those who can see things in men. How much an African has to show to Gaillac, and an inhabitant of Gaillac to Africa! Providence, that orders everything, has not, we may be sure, made these two men meet for nothing, or led the Arab out of his desert to show him France, our civilization, our arts, our manners, our beautiful cathedrals.

10*th*. — A letter written to Louise, my prayers, household avocations, — there you have my day. As I was taking down a large caldron from the fire, Papa told me that he did not like to see me doing such things; but I thought of Saint Bonaventure, who was washing the pots and pans of his convent when they went to offer him, I think, a cardinal's hat. In this world nothing that is low, sin excepted, can degrade us in the eyes of God. And so my caldron gave rise to a salutary reflection which will save me from disquiet in doing certain disgusting

things, such as blackening my hands in the kitchen. Good-night! to-morrow morning I am going to confession. The north wind has been blowing all day long; our labourers were shivering in the fields. To think of having winter in the month of May!

Since yesterday I have not had time to sit down and write. It is a privation to me not to touch my pen, just as it is to a musician to be unable to touch his instrument. The pen is my lyre; I love it as a friend; nothing can detach me from it. There is, as it were, a magnetic attraction betwixt us.

The bark to the billows returns,
  To her mate returns the dove;
And to thee I return, my lyre,
  With an ever-constant love.

It was God that bestow'd thee, no doubt,
  For a voice to my heart when stirr'd,
And I sing out to Him on my way,
  Just as sings the wandering bird.

I blend in this hymn of mine
  Every simple villager's song;
I garner the music that 's made
  By brooks as they warble along.

I list to the sounds that lie down
  With day in the solemn woods,
To the myriad-voiced strain
  Of the thunder and the floods.

I list what the waking infant
By a smile to its cradle says,
What the bee to the rose it rifles,
What the wind to the forest it sways.

I list what in church the organ
Chants to God in its mighty peal,
When the virgins the altar surround,
And the faithful meekly kneel.

And ye Heaven-loving souls, to you too
I list as your yearnings arise,
And deem that I find a holy hymn
In each of your secret sighs.

Poetry would go on apace if I let it have its own way; but to-morrow is Whit-Sunday, a solemn festival that disposes to meditation, that silences the soul for prayer and supplication for the Holy Spirit, the spirit of love and understanding which makes us know and love God. I am going therefore to shut myself into my "guest-chamber," my little room, and to exclude all without if possible. But still, I keep thinking of thee, poor wanderer in the world. If you could but know how I long to have you with us! May God be pleased to bring thee some day, to restore thee to the society of thy own family!

13*th*. — I come back here on Whit-Monday, without dwelling on yesterday, grand and divine

as it was. Let us chat a little about the present moment, while I make Miou, my pupil, read to me. I lend her my ear, but my heart is here, although I am often interrupted by having to correct her. This child's mind is slow and supine, so that one must be continually by to stimulate her. Patience and perseverance; with these something may be made of Miou, not, indeed, a cultivated intellect, but a Christian mind, which knows why God has placed her in the world. Poor little thing! a short time ago she had no notion why. How ignorant we are, how ignorant we all are to begin with! At the age of ten a Lamennais would have known nothing more than Miou does, if he had not been better taught. So it seems to me; as though our intelligence only developed by instruction, just as wood only kindles by contact with the fire.

I am rather fond of teaching little children, and of making them say their catechism. It is a pleasure, and even a duty, to instruct these poor Christians. We may continually act the part of missionaries in our country districts; and I doubt that the savages themselves can know less in the matter of religion than certain of our peasants. Our cook, Marianne, confused *cochons* (pigs) with the commandments;

another thought that to work out one's salvation (*salut*) was to *salute* one's self; and a hundred other pitiable absurdities. But God is merciful, and it is not exactly ignorance that He will punish. We ought to be far more alarmed about men of genius who go astray, about those who know the law and will not keep it, about those blind ones who close their eyes against the daylight. Oh, how all these move me to compassion! how much to be pitied they are! One sees their fate in the parable of the vine and the barren fig-tree. I would write it out, but you know it.

A distress! we have got Trilby sick, so sick that the poor beast will die. I am fond of my little dog, she was so pretty. I remember, too, that you used to be fond of her, and to caress her, calling her *little rogue*. All sorts of memories link themselves with Trilbette, and make me regret her. Small and great affections, — everything in turn, leaves us and dies. The heart is like a tree hung round with dead leaves.

The pastor has been to see us. I have not told you very much about him. He is a worthy, simple man, well acquainted with his duties, speaking about God better than about the world, of which he knows but little. Accordingly, he does not shine in society; his conver-

sation is commonplace, and makes those who do not understand a priestly mind think that he has but little. He does good in the parish; his gentleness wins hearts. He is our father just now. I find him young after M. Bories. I miss that energetic powerful preaching that sustained me; but it is God that has taken it away, and He knows why. Let me submit and walk on like a child, without looking at the hand that leads me. Meanwhile I am not to be pitied; he preaches well, very well for calm natures. Never has Andillac known so gentle an eloquence; he is the Massillon of the country. But God alone can still the agitations of the soul. If you had been a priest you would have known them, and I should have asked counsel from you; but I can say nothing to Maurice. Ah! poor friend! how I regret this! how fain would I pass from the confidence of the heart to that of the soul. There would be something very spiritually sweet in such an outpouring. The mother of Saint François de Sales used to confess to her son; sisters have confessed to their brothers. It is beautiful to see nature thus losing itself in grace.

I have just had a young pigeon brought me, which I mean to keep and tame and caress; it will be a substitute for Trilby. This poor heart

of mine must always have something to love; when it loses one object it takes up another. I notice this, and that we go on loving without interruption, which proves our destination to eternal love. Nothing better enables me . . . Papa came to cut short the words on my tongue. I begin again. Nothing better enables me to understand heaven than to picture it to myself as the home of love; for if here below we cannot love for a moment even without happiness, what will it be to love for ever!

16th. — I have just made a discovery. In turning over an old book of devotion, the 'Guardian Angel,' I found those litanies to Providence that Rousseau, we are told, was so fond of; and those too to the child Jesus, simple and sublime as was that divine childhood. I have been particularly struck with these: "Child that weepest in the cradle, Child that thunderest out of heaven, Child that restored the grace of the earth, Child that art chief of angels," and numberless other touching designations and invocations. If I ever execute a certain project that I have, these litanies shall come under the eyes of children. My pigeon keeps flying over me and whining so tenderly to be put into its nest that I leave thee.

17th. — A fine sunrising makes us hope for a

fine day, a rare thing this May. Never was there a colder, sadder, more barren spring. It does harm to everything; neither chickens nor flowers get born, nor cheerful thoughts either.

Early to-day I went to Vieux, to visit the relics of the saints, and more especially those of Saint Eugenius, my patron. You are aware that this holy bishop was exiled from Carthage into Gaul by an Arian prince. He came first to Alby, thence to Vieux, where he built a monastery, in which a great many saints assembled, and which is now the Mill of Latour. I wish that all who come to have their corn ground there were aware of the sacred veneration due to the place, but the majority are ignorant of it. Indeed, people no longer know why it is that processions should be made to Vieux, of all the parishes in the country. I explained it to Miou, who accompanied me, and who perhaps understands now what relics mean, and what is done in presence of the pavilions where they are exhibited.

I like these pilgrimages, remnants of a former faith, but the time for such things seems nearly over now; the spirit of them is, generally speaking, extinct. People used to go to Vieux praying; now it is a mere promenade. And yet, if Monsieur the Curé omit this procession,

he will be held to have brought down whatever hail falls. Where faith disappears, credulity abounds. We have, however, some good souls who are well worthy of the saint's approbation, such as Rose Drouille, the Durelle who knows how to meditate, who has learned so much over her rosary; and then, too, Françoise de Gaillard and her daughter Jacquette, so attentive and devout in church.

This pious escort, however, did not accompany me; I was alone, with my good angel and Miou. Having heard the mass, and said my prayers, I came away with one hope more. I had gone there to ask something from Saint Eugène; the saints are our brothers. If thou wert all powerful, would'st thou not grant me what I requested of thee? It was of this I thought while invoking Saint Eugène, who is, moreover, my patron. We have so little in this world, at least let us hope in the other.

20*th*. — Three letters have arrived, — one from Euphrasie, one from Antoinette, and a very sad one from Félicité. And so you are ill, poor Maurice! that was why you did not write to us. My God! what would I give to be there close beside thee, — to see, to touch, to nurse thee! Thou art well cared for, no doubt, but thou must need a sister. I know it, I feel it. If ever

I have desired to be with thee, surely it is now. Must it always be some misfortune that brings thee? once the Revolution, then the cholera, now thy illness! Would the pleasure of meeting be else too sweet? God will allow no perfect happiness in this world. All these last days I had been thinking, "If Maurice were to come here during the vacation, what delight! how happy Papa would be!" And now all this happiness is lost in an illness! But only come, come quickly; the air of Cayla, asses' milk, and rest will cure thee. I am sorry not to have answered thee; I shall have perhaps been the cause of sad thoughts which may have done you harm. You will have supposed that I no longer meant to write, no longer cared for your affection. I wrote to you here every day, but I wanted to give you time to long for a letter; that delay would I thought make you reply sooner another time. But a truce to all that! let us not speak of the past; we are going to see and hear each other, and everything will be explained.

22*nd*. — No writing yesterday. The whole of Sunday gets spent in church or on the road. In the evening I am tired; it was with difficulty that I read after supper a little of the 'History of the Church:' but for all that I thought much of thee, God knows. I have asked Rose

to pray for thee. She has promised to do so. This has comforted me; and ever since I am more tranquil, because I believe prayer to be all powerful. I know a proof of it in the case of a little child suddenly restored from total blindness. It is a pretty story, and I must tell it thee. There was at Ouillas, in one of our mountain convents, a young girl as pupil, who was so pious, so sweet, so innocent, that every one loved and revered her like an angel. They say that her confessor, M. Chabbert, whom we had once for curé, found her so pure that he admitted her to her first communion without giving her absolution. She died at the age of fourteen, held in such love and veneration by her former companions that they daily went one after the other to visit her grave, which is kept quite white with lilies in the season of flowers, and to ask her whatever they would; and more than once the saint granted their prayers. For two years people had been flocking to the cemetery, when a poor woman, coming to pick up wood close by, with her little blind boy, happening to call to mind the wonders related of Marie, bethought her of taking her child to the grave and imploring his cure. This was pretty nearly her prayer: —

"Little Saint Mary, you whom I have seen

so good and compassionate, hear me now out of Paradise where you are; restore my son's sight; may God grant me this mercy through you!"

Hardly were the words uttered when the poor mother, still on her knees, hears her child exclaim that he sees! *Ay, mama, té bési!* Scales that closed up his eyes fell off: the same disease had covered his head, so that not a hair was to be seen, and, eight days after, the poor mother was showing everybody her child with beautiful eyes and pretty flaxen curls.

I heard this from Mademoiselle Carayon d'Albi, who had seen the child both in its blind state and after its miraculous cure. It is a charming story, in which I fully believe, and which almost makes me long to go to Ouillas to implore also a something that I should pray for with the whole fervour of my soul.

I expected an account of you this morning. Félicité tells us that you were to have written at the same time she did; but no letter has come, and this delay makes us anxious. Who knows? perhaps you are worse. The weather is not in your favour; always cold or wet. How I shall be longing for it to become fine, for the spring to appear and the air to be mild.

Since yesterday I have made many weather-glasses. It is this severe winter, this cold, ungenial air, which has done thee harm.

I have been giving a good scolding to my little pupil, who is often disrespectful to her mother. In order to make an impression upon her, I told her the incident of ten children cursed by their mothers, whom Saint Augustine had seen at Hippo, perpetually trembling and in a dreadful state altogether. Miou seemed struck by this story; perhaps it will make her more obedient, when tempted to say *No* to her mother. I remember how terrified I was by the idea of these children under a curse. Disobedience was man's first sin, and it is the child's earliest fault; he takes a wicked delight in everything that is forbidden him. We all inherit this feature of our first parent. It was only the Child Jesus of whom it could be truly said that he was submissive and obedient. It would be a beautiful model to set before children, that of the divine childhood with all its virtues and graces, illustrated by some pious Raphael. I have very often thought of this, and formed my group of holy children of the Old and New Testament: Joseph, Samuel, John the Baptist, led into the desert at the age of three; Cyril, who died a martyr at five, the brother of Saint Theresa,

who used to build little oratories for his sister; the virgin Eulalie — but no, she at the age of twelve seems too tall amidst these infantine forms, but I should be sure to find some other little saint to frame in. All this, interspersed with flowers, birds, pearls, would make a pretty picture for childhood. Something prompts me to turn it into a book, as I once talked to you of doing. I do not know how it is that I have never been able to get rid of this idea; on the contrary, it presents itself more frequently than ever.

27th. — Nothing put down here for some days past; but I have written a good deal elsewhere, for I feel a necessity of pouring myself out in some direction. I have done so to Louise and before God; nothing is better than faith for the soul and friendship for the heart. You know what it is that distresses me; to think that you have been very ill, that you may still be so. Who can tell? a hundred leagues off! My God! what misery this distance occasions! I cannot even know where you are, and I want so to know everything. An anxious heart is a very craving and very suffering thing.

Here is the whole of my day: this morning to mass, writing to Louise, reading a little, and then in my own room. Oh, but I do not tell

all I do there! I have got some flowers in a glass; and for a long time I kept looking at two, of which one bent down over the other which opened out its chalice below. It was sweet to contemplate them, and to represent to one's self the confidence of friendship typified in these little blossoms. They are stellarias, — small white flowers with long stalks, — some of the most graceful flowers our fields have. One finds them along the hedges, amidst the grass. There are a good many in the road to the mill, sheltered by a bank which is all spangled with their little white faces. It is my favourite flower, and I have put several before our image of the Virgin. I should like them to be there when you come, and to show you the two friendly blossoms I spoke of. A sweet image, charming on both sides, when I think that a sister is the flower below. I think, my friend, that thou wilt not say nay to this. Dear Maurice, we are going to see and hear each other! These five years of separation will all be recovered in our conversations, our chit-chat, our every moment's say.

30th. — For two days I have said nothing to you, dear Maurice; I have not been able to note down here anything that has occurred to me, whether ideas, events, fears, hopes, sad-

nesses, or happiness. What a book all this would make! Two days of life are sometimes long and full; nay, all are, if we choose to pause over whatever presents itself in their course. Life is like a road bordered with flowers, trees, bushes, grasses, — with innumerable things which might indefinitely fix the eye of the traveller; but he passes on. Oh, yes! let us pass on without allowing ourselves to be too long detained by what we see on earth, where everything withers and dies. Let us look above — gaze on the skies, the stars; rise thence to the heavens, which will not pass away. It is thither the contemplation of nature leads; the soul soars from sensible objects to the regions of faith, and looks down on creation from on high, and then the world seems quite different.

How small is earth to him who views it from the skies! says Delille after a saint, — for saints and poets sometimes have the same ideas. Nothing more true than this smallness of the earth thus beheld by the eye of a soul which knows where to place itself to obtain a correct view. Thus Bossuet learnt to estimate the nothingness of worldly greatness, thus the saints trampled under foot all that shone in the eyes of other men, — fortune, pleasures, glory; and

got themselves treated as fools, by this their singular wisdom.

[*No date.*] — At last a letter from you. You are better, almost well; you are coming. I am thankful, happy; I bless God a thousand times for this good news, and I take up my writing neglected for many days past. I was suffering, I still suffer; but it is only a remnant, a discomfort which will soon be over. Indeed I do not know what it is, nor what I have wrong about me: it is neither head, nor stomach, nor chest, nothing physical; it must then be the mind, poor sick mind!

June. — Two visitors, both persons that I like and who will give us pleasure so long as they will stay here. One cannot say as much for all guests, but Eliza R—— is good and clever, her cousin A—— is very sweet, and without being beautiful has a youthful charm which makes me admire her. My little room is given up to them, so that I shall come to it less often. However, from time to time I do escape and make my way here, as I am doing now, to write, read, and pray — three things that are of use to me. Every now and then the soul needs to find itself alone, and to recollect itself undisturbed. This is what I come here to do. I have written to Félicité, and answered Gabrielle, who eagerly

asked after you so soon as she knew that you were ill. These proofs of friendship touch me and make me bless God for being loved. Affection is so sweet a thing, it blends with joy and softens affliction. Marie de Thézac, too, has shown the same interest. At all events thou hast true friends.

V.

26th of January, 1838.

I RE-ENTER for the first time the little room in which you still were this very morning. How sad the room of an absent friend is! One sees him everywhere, without finding him anywhere. Here are thy shoes under the bed, thy table all dressed out, the looking-glass suspended on the nail, the books thou wert reading last night before going to sleep; and here am I, who then embraced thee, touched thee, beheld thee! What is this world in which everything disappears? Maurice, my dear Maurice, oh, how I want thee and God! Accordingly, as soon as we had parted, I went to church, where one can weep and pray at one's ease. What do you do — you, who do not pray — when you are sad, when your heart is broken? For my part, I feel that I require a superhuman consolation; that one must needs have God for friend, when what one loves makes one suffer.

What has happened to-day that can be written down? Nothing but thy departure; I have

seen only thee going away, only that cross where we parted. Had the King come here, I should not have cared; but I have seen no one but Jeannot bringing back your horses. I was at the window at the time, but drew my head in; it seemed as though I were looking at the return of a hearse.

It is evening now; the end of a very long, very sad day. Good-night; thou mightest still almost hear me, thou art not far away yet; but to-morrow — the day after — ever farther, farther off!

27*th*. — Where art thou this morning? After this cry I am going hence as if to look for thee, here and there, where we have been together so lately.

I have done nothing but sew and iron. I have read but little, only the good old Saint Francis de Sales, at his chapter on the affections. That was the very one for me! the heart ever seeks out appropriate food. For my part, I could live upon loving; whether father, brothers, sisters, — something I must always have.

What is there to be said on Sundays, when the pastor does not preach? It is the manna of our desert — this word from Heaven — which drops down gentle and stainless, and has a pure and simple taste that I love. I came back fast-

ing from Andillac; but since, I have been reading Bossuet, those fine sermons so scored by thy hand. I left them with my mark often above thine. So it is, everywhere we meet, like a pair of eyes; what you see to be beautiful, I see beautiful too. The Almighty has made a part of the soul very much alike in us two.

28*th*. — By this time, no doubt, you have left Toulouse; you roll on, go your way, get farther from us. Oh that, at least, you may not cough during your journey — that it may not be cold — that no accidents may occur! ! ! "What is to happen to him, O my God, I cannot know; all I do know is that nothing will happen that has not been arranged, foreseen, ordained by Thee from all eternity. This suffices me, my God, this suffices me! I adore Thy eternal and impenetrable designs; I submit to them with all my heart for love of Thee! I will everything; I accept everything; I sacrifice everything to Thee; and I unite this sacrifice to that of Jesus Christ, my Saviour. I ask Thee in His name for perfect submission to all Thou willest and permittest to happen. May the most just, most exalted, and most gracious will of God be accomplished in all things." — Prayer of Madame Elizabeth in the Temple tower, very often repeated by me in the little room.

I am going to write to our cousin Saint-Hilaire; then we shall go to Cahuzac, with Mimi, to see Françon, who is very ill.

29th. — Thunder, hail, autumn, this morning. Summer weather now, the sun is hot and oppressive. What variations in the sky and in all things! Everything was frozen a fortnight ago, and thou wert here: it is not the cold that I lament. Oh, that north wind, that blew then, gave me such pleasure! I used to bless it each time that I passed shivering through the hall. And yet you had to go; I consented to it for the sake of her who was waiting for you in Paris: one must know how to part in this world. Would that I could know where you are, what point you have got to, what way you make; in order to join thee, to embrace thee! Would that my arms were long enough to reach all those I love! I can conceive how God, who is Love, should be everywhere.

The pastor has been to see us; his visit was a pleasure to me. I like his little chit-chat, which does not go farther than his parish, nor require an effort to follow, however downcast one's mood may be. I don't know what I have been scribbling; my ideas are constrained, ill at ease, tied by the leg, as it were, and struggling oddly enough in my head. Shall I let

them have their way? No! After a tender good-night, I leave you.

31st. — I have discovered in myself a droll affection indeed. Foolish heart of mine, that takes to everything! Shall I tell it? I am fond of the three leeches that are on the mantelpiece. I should not like either to give them away, or to see them die; I change their water every day, taking great care that none of them drop out. If I do not see them all, I take up the phial and look what is going on inside it, with other unequivocal signs of affection; and this because these leeches were brought here for Charles — that Charles came with Caroline — and that Caroline came for thee! Droll sequence this, which makes me laugh at what the heart can string together. What a variety of things! It is amusing to reflect on this, and to be able to see you, amidst leeches! Impossible even to separate you as yet; these creatures indicate hot or cold weather, rain, sunshine, and I have been continually consulting them since you went away. Fortunately the phial has always stood at fair. We say, over and over again, "Maurice will have arrived without catching cold, without severe weather, without rain." Thus it is, my friend, that we keep thinking of thee — that everything makes us so think.

1*st February*. — A dark, cloudy day ,— disma inside and out. I am more dejected than usual, and, as I do not choose to yield to dejection, I have taken up my sewing to kill it with the point of my needle ; but the ugly serpent still writhes, though I have cut off head and tail both, — that is to say, idleness and enervating thoughts. The heart gets debilitated by these mournful impressions, and that does harm. Oh, if I but knew music ! They say it is so good, so soothing for disorders of the soul.

2*nd* (*Friday*). — This day week, at this very hour, you went away. I am about to pass along the road where we parted. It is Candlemas ; I am going to church with my taper.

We have come back from Andillac with a letter from Félicité ; there was one for thee from Caroline, which I returned, slipping into it a word for the dear sister. I may well call her so at the point we have got to ; it is but anticipating a few months, I hope. And yet who knows ? I am always in anxiety about this affair, and about you, bad artisan of happiness that you are ! I am afraid that you will not perfect this happiness ; that you will leave unfastened the last link of the chain that would unite you for ever. . . . *For ever* seems to me alarming for thee, independent, wandering eagle ! How fix thee in thy aërie ! . . .

Nor is this the only particular. God knows what others I find in thee that distress and sadden me. If from the heart we pass on to the soul, oh, it is there, it is there! . . . But what is the use of talking, and observing, and complaining? I do not feel myself holy enough to convert, or strong enough to influence thee. God alone can do this. I pray much that He may, for my own happiness depends on it. You may not perhaps conceive how. You, with your philosophical eye, do not discern the tears of a Christian eye over a soul in danger, a soul so much loved, the soul of a brother, sister soul of one's own. All this makes one lament like Jeremiah.

Here is this day ending with snow. I am glad to think of you at your journey's end, now that the cold has returned. Provided only that you do not suffer from your long walks — that your chest keep well — that M. d'A—— do not make you sit up too late while relating his troubles. A thousand anxieties suggest themselves and sadden me; a thousand thoughts rise in me, and fall in flakes over Paris.

I found my first poem among some scraps of paper, and put it by. I put by everything I find that I should have shown thee, hadst thou been here. That you should no longer be here some-

times seems impossible; I keep saying to myself that you will soon return, and yet you are very far away; and your shoes, those two empty feet that still stand in your room, do not stir. I look at them, I love them almost as much as that little pink shoe you were reading about to me the other day in Hugo. The heart can thrust itself in everywhere, into a shoe, into a phial; one would say it was a very silly thing. Do you not say so?

3rd. — I have begun my day by fitting myself up a distaff, very round, very firm, very smart, with its bow of ribbon. There, I am going to spin with a small bobbin. One must vary work and amusements; tired of a stocking, I take up my needle, then my distaff, then a book. So time passes, and carries us away on its wings.

Eran has just arrived. I was longing to see him, and to know on what day you had left Gaillac. It was on a Friday, then, — the same day you went from here. It was on a Friday, too, that you set off for Brittany. This day is not a happy one; Mamma died on a Friday, and I have remarked that other sad events have happened on it. I do not know whether one ought to believe in fatal days.

4th. — There are some days that are happy, — the Sunday, — often the Sunday. Letters as we

came from mass; one of yours from Bordeaux. At length news of you, — your handwriting at length! When shall I have other letters from Paris? How ambitious the heart is! This morning transported with what I hold; now it is not enough! I sent you back a letter from M——; very sorry not to have time to slip in a word for you. This word is here; you will come upon it very late. Who knows when this little book will reach you; whether it will be it or me you will see first? I should like it to be me.

I leave thee with a regret, a secret that I may not tell thee because it is not mine. One day perhaps I shall be able to speak of it. It would take up a great space on this paper, my confidant, if it had not been written before under seal of secrecy in my heart.

5th. — I have not time to write.

6th. — I have written a good deal, but far from here, — not for here. It is a pity, for I could have filled many sheets with what springs from my heart to-day. This is what you like. Augustine came to spend the day with us, no one being at home at the parsonage. This little one, who generally amuses me, failed to do so, and must have found my face stern and my air preoccupied. I took my distaff by way of

diversion, but all the while I was spinning my mind spun, and wound, and turned its bobbin at a fine rate. *I* was not at my distaff; the soul just sets that kind of mechanical work going, and then leaves it. Where does that soul go to? Where was mine to-day? God knows where, and you too in a measure; you know that I am seldom away from you, not even when I read those fine sermons with which you made me acquainted. I find in them so many things applicable to thee. Oh, you ought indeed to continue to read them!

7th. — A loud north wind, a grand orchestra at my window. I am rather fond of this harmony proceeding from all the ill-jointed frames, the ill-closed shutters, and all the holes in the walls, and having a variety of notes, some so ridiculously shrill that they would pierce the hardest hearing. Droll kind of music this of Cayla, that I, as I said, am fond of, because I have no other. One who never hears anything else will listen to a noise, whatever it be.

A visit, a friend! M. Linier. Almost in entering, "How is M. Maurice; have you heard from him?" "To-morrow, to-morrow we shall, no doubt." Questions like this please; one sees that it is the heart that puts them. These worthy priests love us; we have no better

friends in the whole country. Good-night; I must needs busy myself with the supper, and prepare the bed. To-night Eran is to occupy your little room. To-morrow morning I shall come to see if it is you who are there; I shall listen if you call out to me, "Come in alone; open the door, and come in." Alas! alas! how things pass away, and how memories remain!

8th. — Oh! letters, letters from Paris; one from thee. You have arrived, well in health, cheerful, welcome! God be praised! I can give nothing else a thought. I tell everybody, "Maurice has written to us; he has got well over his journey, has had fine weather," and a hundred other things that start up.

We have a fine day, sweet weather, mild air, a cloudless sky; nothing but leaves are wanted to make us suppose ourselves in the month of May. This smiling nature mollifies the soul, and disposes it for happiness. "Impossible," thought I, as I was walking this morning, "impossible but that something pleasant must occur;" and I got your letter. I was not mistaken.

These letters, this writing, what pleasure it gives me! how the heart falls and feeds upon it. But by and by one grows sad again, joy subsides, regrets rise, and make one think that

after all a letter is but a small thing in place of a person. One is never satisfied ; all our joys are truncated. God will have it so — will have it so, and that the beautiful bit that is ever wanting be only found in heaven. There happiness in its completeness, there eternal reunion. This ought surely to excite desires in certain hearts, ought to make them live like Christians.

Wrote to Louise, to Marie.

9th. — Anniversary of our grandfather's death. We have been to mass : on my return I wrote to thee ; I am still writing. I could write always and everywhere, on the tiles of thy little room, on the soles of thy shoes ; who can say where thought may not go and light ; but I carry it in here, like a bird upon its branch, and it sings. What shall I tell thee ? the first thing that comes uppermost ? — that at this same season there was once mourning and joy at Cayla, death and baptism — the death of the grandfather, the birth of the grandson. At this time Erembert came into the world. It is sad to be born beside a grave, but so we all are ; life and death touch. What is it that Shakespeare's gravediggers say about this, — I know not where ?

I have not read much of your favourite author, though I consider him admirable, like M. Hugo ; but these geniuses have blots that

shock a woman's eye. I detest to meet with what I do not choose to see, and this makes me close many a book, — 'Notre-Dame de Paris,' for instance. That I take up a hundred times a day; the style, that Esmeralda, her goat, so many pretty things tempt me, say to me, "Read, look." I do look, I turn over the pages, but there are stains here and there in those pages that stop me; no more reading, and I content myself with merely looking at the pictures. I am still as fond of them as a child. I could hardly help tearing out the one about the cake of Indian corn, of that very pretty mother, and very pretty child. We have admired it together, which accounts for its delighting me.

But I have got very far from our grandfather, and from the serious thoughts that were arising upon birth and death. Let us return to them; they too are dear to me, and I happen to have a book open before me with this passage of Bossuet on the subject: "Does there not indeed appear to be a certain relation between swaddling-clothes and winding-sheets? Those that are newly born are wrapped almost in the same way as the newly dead, a cradle has some resemblance to a sepulchre, and it is a token of our mortality that we should be buried at our birth."

10*th*. — I come back to where I was yesterday, to speak about death, life, and Bossuet, — those three grand things. The infant belonging to the wife of Jean Roux is at this moment being carried to the churchyard. We hear the bell, which is making the poor mother weep bitterly, and occasions in me thoughts that are half sweet, half gloomy. One reminds one's self that these little departed ones are happy, that they are in heaven; but one thinks of adults, of those souls of full-grown men that go to appear before God with so many days to number, and what days? . . . When their life is laid open, that journal kept by God, as says Bossuet, and one sees . . . But I erase; it does not behove me to make an examination of souls, — that is the office of God only. May they all be happy, may not one of those I love be wanting in heaven! This is enough to occupy me, and to change all my questionings into prayer.

A letter from Marie, another from Hippolyte, laconic in its style. "Come such a day, thou wilt oblige me." This was not for me, as you may suppose, but an invitation to Eran for a luncheon and a ball. Everything is stirring just now; gaiety has sounded to arms, and few are absent from the muster. Here we merely listen, we converse, we spin, we read, we write to our

friends; such is the peaceful Cayla life that I love, and should regret if I had to leave it. I am as attached to it as a bird to its cage. My goldfinch always used to come back to his when I let him out, and he could make but little of flying. So it would be with me; my wings would not carry me far into the world. A corner of a room in which you would be, with Caroline your wife, is all. That is my Paris, my world.

11*th*. — A letter from Louise, the dear friend who on setting out for the wedding wrote me a letter prettier than the jewels of the bride.

12*th*. — Papa is gone to the ——. The pastor has been here. We have had snow and sunshine, great variety of weather, and little to say. I am not in a mood to write or to do anything amiable; quite the contrary. There are these days when the soul draws into its shell, and plays the hedgehog. If you were there, close beside me, alas! I should prick you very badly, I think. But would to God it were so! I should not be fancying that perhaps you are not feeling well in that Paris air.

13*th*. — I am just come from Andillac with a beautiful large apple that Toinon d'Aurel gave me, to thank me for having been to see her son, who is ill. Nothing more grateful than a

mother, and a poor mother. Our leeches have come in for the poor child. What better use could we make of them after they had served as a weather-glass during your journey? I care much less for them now. Thus it is that my affections very often prove to be interested, and ebb and flow according to the day. And now here is Papa, arriving ill from ——, as he does every time he goes there. There are places which are not good for us. I am always afraid Paris should have this effect upon you. At all events, if Papa is ill, we have him here to nurse. Perhaps it will be nothing after all. Who knows? Anxiety soon gets possession of the heart.

Papa is better; he has been feverish, and has slept ill. We gave him up our room, which is warmer than his, and I took your bed. It is very long since I slept there before; not, I think, since I tore from the paper on the wall the hand of a man who was about to rob a nest painted on it. At all events, I gave him credit for this wicked intention, which used to put me in a passion every morning I woke, and which at last I punished by an act of severity for which I was myself punished in my turn. They scolded me for having mutilated the poor man, without listening to my assurances that he was

wicked. Who, indeed, discerned this but me? In order to manage children well, we must borrow their eyes and their hearts, see and feel as they do, and judge them from their own point of view. One would spare them thus many tears that flow because of ill-said lessons. Poor little children! how it pains me to see them unhappy, teased, contradicted. Do you recollect the *Pater* that I used to repeat mentally, that Papa might not scold you at lessons? I have the same compassion still, with this difference, that now I pray God to make parents reasonable.

If I had a child to bring up, how gently and cheerfully I should set about it, with all the care that is given to a delicate flower! Then I should speak to them of the good God in loving words: I should tell them that He loved them even better than I, — that He not only gave me everything that I gave them, but the air, the sun, and the flowers besides; that He had made the sky and all the beautiful stars. These stars, — I can recollect what a beautiful idea they gave me of God; how often I used to get up, after I had been put to bed, to look at them out of the little window at the foot of my bed, in our cousin's house at Gaillac. This window was nailed up, for I used to open it and to hang out of it, at the risk of falling over into

the street. This proves that children have a sense of the beautiful, and that it is easy to inspire them with faith and love by means of God's works.

And now you must know that this morning, in opening the window, I heard the song of a blackbird who was singing as loud as ever he could up above on Golse. It was delightful, this song of spring, amidst the crows; it was like a rose in snow. Mimi is gone to the hamlet, Papa is in his room, Eran is at Gaillac, and I with thee. This is often the state of things.

15*th*. — Another letter about a ball. Poor dancers! to whom do they address themselves? As well knock at a convent as at the Cayla. But I am wrong; they have Eran, Eran who dances, converses, plays, does all manner of pleasant, amiable things, and gets himself called charming. Indeed, he is very agreeable both to men and women; he is a complete man of the world. Alas! there are many such!

I have read some pages, written a little, thought a great deal, and made a charming spindleful; and all this is called a day — one of my days.

16*th*. — A blank, — that is better than anything that I should have put down. Is it worth

while to say that I did not feel well to-day; that I went with Mimi to walk off my discomfort in the woods and fields; that we came upon a lark that went off singing, and that I rather envied it its wings and its joy?

17*th*. — A letter from Caroline. What a happiness to know you so loved, so well cared for, only having to cross the street to find yourself in your own room! No more colds, no more fears, no more of those dragons that I used to fancy at thy heels in Paris. God be praised, I am at rest! In all this I see the arranging of Providence, who orders all for your good. And yet, you do not love the good God! His mercies toward you shine in my eyes like diamonds. Only look, my friend, at all that has come to sweeten your poor position; at this unexpected assistance, this family affection, this mother, this sister who is more than sister, — so loving, so gentle, so pretty, — who promises you so much happiness. Do you not see something in all this, some Divine hand ordering your life? I now begin to hope for you a future better than the past, that past which has made us suffer so much. But all of us have our time of tribulation, misfortune, servitude in Egypt, before the manna and the sweetness of life.

Romiguières has been to spend the evening

here, to warm himself at our fire, and talk of sheep and asses, and — what especially amused me — to show his papers in order to get to know his real age ; he had made a mistake of seven years ! Happy man, ignoring his own life ! These peasant-lives pass on, like the brooks, without knowing how long they have been flowing. They have indeed their epochs, but they do not date as we do. They will tell you, " I was born when this field was in corn. I married when that tree was planted, or that house was being built." Grand and beautiful registers ! Bernardin, I think, makes Virginie speak thus ; for my part, I have heard it a hundred times at Andillac or here. Simple nature is everywhere the same.

At night, with my feet in a footbath. — In this rather too hot water, I am thinking of the martyrs ; of what those baths of pitch, oil, or boiling water, into which they were plunged, must have been. What men ! Were they really of our nature ? Can one believe it, when one feels so acutely the least touch of pain — a spark, a drop of water ? when one cries out, and draws back as I have just been doing ? What should I have done in Blandina's place ? My God ! doubtless as she did, for faith renders us superhuman, and I think I do truly believe.

18*th*. — Brought back from Andillac one letter announcing a death, and another a marriage, — that of Mademoiselle de Saint-Géry with M. de Morlière. Tears and joys; blendings of almost every day in life, which is composed of perpetual contrasts.

19*th*. — Waited till evening, to see what I should have to say. Nothing. Do you like that? If you preferred words, I could find some in my heart, even when they did not spring from anything without. A woman's heart is talkative, and does not require much; it is able of itself to extend to infinity, and to play the eloquent out of that little chest where it dwells, as out of an orator's tribune. My friend, how many times I have harangued thee thus! but when I do not believe either that I can give thee pleasure, or be of use to thee, why, then I am silent; I take up my distaff, and, instead of *the woman of the seventeenth century*, I am the simple country-girl, and this pleases me, diverts me, relaxes my mind. There is one side of my character which comes into close contact with the simplest classes, and infinitely enjoys them. Accordingly I have never been given to dream of greatness or fortune, but how often of a little home far from cities, very neat, with its deal furniture, its shining

household utensils, its trellised door, hens! and myself there, with I know not whom, — for I would not have a peasant such as ours, who are boors, and who beat their wives. Do you remember . . . ?

VI.

Continuation of the 19th February (1838).

HERE is a new book. What shall I put into it? what shall I say, shall I think, shall I see, before I get to the end of it? Will it contain happiness or unhappiness — will it have . . . ? But what matters it! I shall take whatever comes, just as the brook does down yonder. These inquiries into the future only serve to torment one, because we generally foresee in it more pains than pleasures. The sick, the dead, the afflicted, how know I what phantoms are to be met with in this obscurity?

Yesterday it struck me that Papa might be going to have a stroke, because he complained of a numbness of the right side, — his father having died of one much at the same age. Poor Father! what should I do on earth without him? I have never looked upon myself as placed in the world for anything else than his happiness; God knows this, and that I have devoted my life to him. The idea of leaving him never occurred to me, except to enter a con-

vent; and even this thought is wearing out, so impossible do I feel it to tear myself hence, to go away from home even to go with thee. Paris has little attraction for me, I assure you; I should never take two steps in its direction if you came here as a family man to be with us, to live with us. Impossible delight! Present sadness and bitterness; this is all that comes of meddling with the future! It would have been better to have taken up the thread of the other book; to have continued my tale like Scheherezade.

I was about then to ask you whether you remembered that man we met once upon the Gaillac road, who by his way of entering his home like a thunderclap gave me a sort of terror; and how much talk you and I had about conjugal happiness and unhappiness. Then, turning to the subject of your marriage, pleasant thoughts came into our minds. I told thee that the good God had surely made Caroline for thee as He did Eve for Adam, and you asked me to pray that He might also grant you a little angel of a daughter. As soon as you are married I shall not fail to do so. Night calls me hence.

24*th*. — A day that begins with rain and the cawing of crows. We shall see what will happen

between this and evening. I have no written for some days, owing to certain visits we have had, — to I know not what besides that prevented my writing. It is not the heart that keeps silence.

How well I did to wait until evening! Could I have put in anything more charming than what I see, what I hold, what I feel, — than the pleasure thy letter has given me, the second thou hast written since thy return to Paris? Oh, how full of happiness it is, and how delighted I am to know thou art at length as I have long wished thee to be! You do not go out, you do not endanger your health, you do not see company; in the midst of Babylon, your letters might be dated from some solitude. Unexpected wisdom this, which enchants me, makes me bless God, makes me hopeful, consoles me, fills my heart with a nameless feeling that leads me to rejoice on your account. O brothers, brothers! we love you so much! If you but knew it, if you but understood how precious your welfare is to us, and by what sacrifices we would purchase it! O my God, may they indeed understand it, and not so readily expose their dear healths and their dear souls!

More letters and packets, report of the 'Propagation of the Faith,' mandate from our Arch-

bishop. This medley has been poured out of an apron, and covers the whole of the round table.

Ten o'clock in the evening. — This day was marked out for pretty things, for arrivals. The box, the long-expected box, is come. Cuffs, frills, comb, brush, pins, fragrant powder, — all circulate from hand to hand. It is M. de Thézac's little Mariette who has brought this to us from Gaillac. Good-night! I am going to think happily about thee and Caro; I am going to sleep well.

25*th.* — A month this very day and hour since thy departure. This somewhat changes the "couleur de rose" of last evening; but adieu! I have to think of quite other than human things: it is Sunday and I am setting off to church. We all dine at the priest's; he shall have your remembrances, and you mine before God. It is there that they are most precious.

26*th.* — One moment's escape, — one moment with thee while I am waited for in the kitchen. I should prefer my own little room; but they are stewing ducks, making pastry, preparing a little carnival dinner which needs my aid. We are expecting the pastor; if I could but expect some one besides! All who come make me think of you who come not. Let us, however, draw near in heart, let us write to each other, —

thou from thy cell in the world, I from my little room in this solitude. From without, very different things will suggest themselves to us two ; it will not, I hope, be so from within. Paris and the Cayla have less resemblance than our souls, our thoughts, our two beings. It is tiresome to have to separate in order to make pastry.

27*th*. — It rains ; I was watching it rain, and then I proposed to myself to let my thoughts, too, fall thus drop by drop on this paper. This will clear my sky, which is laden as well as the other, not indeed with great clouds, but with a something that veils the blue, the serene. I would fain smile on everything, and feel myself inclined to tears ; and yet I am not unhappy. Whence, then, comes this? Probably it is because our soul grows weary on this earth, poor exile that it is ! . . . There is Mimin at her prayers ; I will do as she does and take my weariness to God. Oh me ! what would have become of me without prayer, without faith, without the thought of heaven, without that woman's piety which turns into love, into divine love ? I should have been lost, and devoid of any happiness on earth — you may believe me ; I have as yet found none anywhere, or in any human thing, not even in thee.

28*th*, *Ash Wednesday*. — Here I am with ashes on my brow and solemn thoughts. This *Memento pulvis* is fearful ; the whole of to-day I keep hearing it. I cannot abstract myself from the thought of death, more particularly in this room, where I no longer see thee, where I have seen thee dangerously ill, where thy presence and thy absence alike suggest melancholy images.

One thing alone is smiling, the little medal of the Virgin suspended at the head of thy bed. It is still bright and in the same place where I put it as a safeguard for you. If you knew, my friend, the pleasure I take in looking at it ; the memories, the hopes, the secret, sacred things connected in my heart with that holy image ! I shall keep it as a relic, and if you ever return to sleep in this little bed you will sleep once more beside the medal of the Virgin. Tolerate in me this confidence, this love, not for a bit of metal, but for the image of the Mother of God. I should much like to know whether in your new cell one would see the Saint Theresa that used to hang in the other near the holy-water vessel.

Where thou in need of grace
Fainting, would'st take the alms that met thy case.[1]

[1] Lines by Saint Theresa to her brother.

You no longer take them thence, I much fear, — your alms ; whence do you take them ? Who knows ? Is the world in which you are living now rich enough for your needs ? Maurice, if I could but infuse into thee some of my thoughts on this subject, if I could but insinuate into your mind what I believe, and what I learn in books of devotion, those beautiful reflections of the Gospel ! If I could but see you a Christian ! . . . I would give life and everything for that.

M. Fieuzet has been with us for the last three days, and introduces a little variety into our somewhat uniform conversations, — always about fields or sheep, unless indeed letters arrive ; and they do not come every day. This worthy Curé amuses us, narrates all sorts of little incidents connected with parishes, parsonages, and the church, which, blended with sprightly sallies, are really amusing. We laughed heartily over a curé in the neighbourhood who had the bells rung for a wedding party who were passing through his parish ; we laughed over that wedding party mounted on a cart drawn by oxen, over the triumphal arch above the cart, and the motto on the arch. . . .

1*st March.* — Just now I was watching two little vagrants passing in a state of ecstasy under

the great poplar-tree. They could not sufficiently lift their heads and eyes, and I was thinking that in like manner whatever is high attracts our intellect, and that I should do just the same as they below the Pyramids of Egypt, . . . when a very small bird, chancing to light upon the summit of the poplar, made me feel the impotence of our poor human nature, and took down the pride of my thoughts.

Come, here are provisions for Lent, Massillon just sent me by Eliza. I shall read a sermon every day. Thus the soul is catered for; the mind must fare as it can. I do not know with what to feed it; I have no books that suit my taste. And yet I needs must have something; I cannot dispense with reading, — furnishing that which thinks and lives with aliment of some kind. I am going to devote myself to serious subjects, — to 'Indifference in Matters of Religion.' This is the best thing I can get at; and then I am glad, too, to read again what I first met with in my youth, — what amazed, penetrated, and enlightened me like a new sky. When M. l'Abbé Gagne recommended me this work I hardly knew anything besides the 'Imitation' and a few devotional books. Judge therefore of the effect these powerful lectures made, and how widely they expanded

my mind! From that moment I had a new view of things; a revelation, as it were, took place in me, of the world, of God, of everything. It was a delight and a surprise like that of the chicken leaving its shell. And what charmed me above all was that my faith, by feeding upon all these grand subjects, grew deep and strong.

14*th*. — A gap, a silence of twelve days. A journey to Gaillac, whither I had not taken my book. I meant to return that same evening; but Louise, whom I went to see, was at Saint-Géry, so I had to wait for the dear friend, which kept me out longer than I wished — I am not fond of going from home. Nothing gives me so much pleasure as my desert; to-day, that it is resplendent with sunshine and soft light, I would not change it for the most magnificent city. I do not like a house-top for horizon, nor to walk in the streets when our roads are fringing themselves with flowers. Just now it is a delight to be in the open air, and to wander as the partridges do. Papa has been able to go with us to the end of the long vine. We sat down for a short time in the wood, near the spot where Caroline lost her footing. We talked of her and her fall. I saw again the group that we then formed in the midst of the oak-trees, — a group, alas! so widely dispersed!

and these reflections over, I ran to look for violets on a hill-side exposed to the sun. They were the first we had seen. I put one here, and offer it thee as the first fruits of the Cayla spring.

I do not tell you what I did and saw at Gaillac; it is not worth while, unless I were to speak of Louise. And indeed I saw but very little of her, and she was so occupied, so surrounded, that we could have no confidential talk. We are getting anxious; you do not write, nor Caro, nor any one. This is a post-day, but nothing comes; and yet I wrote to you by M. Louis de Rivières, and sent you one of my copy-books. Is this not worth a word?

15*th*. — A letter, but not from thee! It comes from Euphrasie, who gives me news of Lili, sad news which make me dread to lose this poor friend. I am going to Cahuzac to communicate them to my aunt.

16*th*. — The *Vialarette* will never more bring you chestnuts and *échaudés* from Cordes; poor girl! she died last night. I regret her on account of her good qualities, her fidelity, her attachment to us. If we were ill, there she was at once; if we wanted any little service rendered, she was ready; and then she was so discreet, so much to be trusted, one of the

small number of persons to whom one might safely confide a secret. This was the sublime feature of her condition, as it seems to me, this religion of secret-keeping, which she had not learnt from education. I would have trusted her with anything.

Not one of the Andillac women approaches this poor Marie in elevation of feeling, or strong and living faith. You should have heard her speak out, clearly and straightforwardly, to the village philosophers, to those who spoke lightly of God, of confession, of all the holy things at which it is too much the custom to laugh in village gatherings. Oh, she loved them all! She used to confess, to fast, to keep Lent with five pennyworth of oil, to believe in heaven; and she must be there, I hope. God will have accepted this pure and simple soul. Her faults were merely inequalities of temper, oddities of character which sometimes made her disagree with her neighbours. But they were soon forgotten; some service rendered would rub out hasty words, and now they are all sounding her praises.

I went to see her yesterday evening; she did not know me. I took her hand, it was cold and pulseless; when I went away I was quite aware that I had seen her for the last time.

That cold hand, that smothered pulsation, — it was death that I had been touching! How sad, how gloomy, how awful it is, this passage into the other life! What would become of us, my God, if faith did not throw its light, its hopes athwart it! Happy they who can hope, who can say with La Vialarette, "I have known God and have served Him!" Her knowledge did not go beyond the Catechism, nor her prayers beyond the *Pater Noster;* but everything is included therein for Christians, great and small. Would to God that M. de Lamennais had never gone further!

Mimi acted as sister of charity to our poor friend, and by her exhortations helped her to endure. It was to her the sufferer confided her secrets connected with the next life, told what masses she desired for the repose of her soul, and for this purpose made over to her sixty francs that she had kept deposited in a fagot, — a fagot collected branch by branch, as was the money penny by penny. Holy idea this of the poor! What merit this deposit will have in God's sight! Of how much cold and heat, of how many steps, efforts, privations, has it been composed! Who knows how many bits of bread she bought from her hunger to devote their price to her soul? Simple and admirable faith!

17*th*. — I have just returned from the funeral of this poor girl, the first person I ever saw committed to the grave. It was a painful sight; but I wished to accompany to the last her who had neither brother nor sister of her own, her who had followed to that same churchyard all those members of her family whom she had seen die, her who had taken so many steps for us, alas! on this very day, *Saturday*. In short, I determined to show her this mark of affection, and to accompany her by my prayers to the borders of the next world. I heard mass by the side of her coffin.

There was a time when this would have terrified me, but now — I know not how it is — I find it quite natural to die; coffins, deaths, tombs, churchyards, only inspire me with feelings of faith, only raise my soul on high. The thing that struck me most was hearing the coffin drop into the grave: hollow, lugubrious sound, man's last! Oh, how penetrating it is! how far it enters into the soul that listens to it! But all do not listen; the gravediggers seemed to look on as at a falling tree; little Cotive, and other children, kept peeping in as into a ditch where there were flowers, with inquisitive, wondering faces. My God! my God! what indifference surrounds the tomb!

How wise the saints are to die beforehand, to perform their own obsequies by retiring from the world! Is it worth while to remain in it? No, it is not worth while, were it not for a few beloved souls with whom God wills us to keep company in this life. There is Papa, who has just been to pay me a visit in my room, and in going away left two kisses on my brow. How can one leave these tender fathers?

Again in anxiety about you; no letters. I have written to you in Paris. Just now I am going to the sermon, — that is, going to read one in the chimney corner. One can make every place a church.

18*th*. — Rain, mud, wind, wintry day and Sunday. A good little discourse to make up to me for the fatigue of my walk. Uneasy this evening; no letter.

19*th*. — The relations of La Vialarette have been to thank us, before they went away, for the care we took of her, and to offer us whatever we might like. . . . Amidst a heap of phials and other rubbish I saw a little white pot that we used yearly to fill with preserves for her. I asked for it as a remembrance. I have it; shall keep it and look at it, sacred little pot that it is, as if it were that of the widow of Sarepta.

A spindleful, a little reading, a little writing,

a few glances at the rain, have made up my day. I am not speaking of what goes on within the soul. Last night I dreamed that I saw your bed all in flames. What mean these fears by night and day that you cause me? Oh that at least I may not have to be anxious about thy health! All the rest, that God knows of, is quite enough. Will there be letters from thee to-morrow?

20*th*. — No letter.

21*st*. — I go on waiting. To-morrow, perhaps to-morrow.

24*th*. — At last something! It is not from you indeed, but what of that? I know that you are alive; that is enough for me. I had been so full of fears! My God! how much your silence has made me suffer! what torments, imaginations, suppositions, distresses! What terror, too, on seeing that letter with a black seal! Ah! M. d'Aurevilly little knows the shock he gave me. I let his letter fall; Erembert took it up, opened it, and returned it me. I understood, I read, I saw; no more terror. The poor pear is the cause of all this! Very eloquent thanks and compliments, but unwelcome under that black seal. Accordingly their effect was merely sad; a nameless gloom remained behind in my soul, like a black dye upon which no

other colour can take. I say to myself over and over again, "You thought he was dead; he is living, he is well, his health you are told will soon be on a par with his happiness." But neither that nor anything else can free me from anxiety on your account. I have re-read the letter, and see to a certainty from it that you have been ill. Would your friend tell me that when I arrive in Paris I shall find thee perfectly well if thou hadst not been suffering? Oh, yes, thou art ill! I have had a fear of this for some time back. Poor dear health, that I can neither observe nor take care of. . . . Nothing is left me but to recommend it to the good God, my holy resource.

25*th*, *Sunday*. — An excellent discourse on confession. How clear, simple, and true it was! How well the preacher succeeded in bringing the proofs of the divine institution of confession within the grasp of Andillac minds, and at the same time instructing our poor philosophers ignorant of their catechism! I should like to have had you there; you would have approved it highly, especially when, after having answered objections, confounded enmity, refuted pretexts, got rid of objections, he spoke of the benefits of confession — of the peace it instils into the individual, the family, and the parish, illustrat-

ing this by examples, and ending by calling us all with his Good Shepherd's voice to his feet, his arms, his heart: "My brothers, a mother who loses her daughter does not grieve more than I when I see one of your souls die in sin." And this was no mere phrase, it was an expression of faith and charity. This is really what these good priests think and feel!

Oh, how worthy of our reverence are those who have the spirit of God, who go about doing good! I venerate them as I do relics, and think poorly of those who speak ill of them. This occurs to me in connection with certain mockers. But it is night; and, moreover, it is not worth while to speak of such people. If I can, I shall return this evening before going to bed.

27*th.* — They were true, then, those presentiments of mine; you are ill, you have had three attacks, you cough! What distress! My poor Maurice, must I then be thus far away from thee, unable any longer to see thee, to hear thee, or to take care of thee! It is now that I long to be in Paris, to have a room next to thine, as I had here, so as to hear thee breathe, sleep, cough. Alas! I have to hear all this across two hundred leagues! Oh, distance, distance! I suffer greatly, but God wills it so, and makes

me pay thus dearly for my sisterly affection. No joy without bitterness, nor even without sacrifice. If I were near thee I fancy that you would feel better; that I should watch over what you eat, what you drink, over the very air you breathe. May Providence do this, and keep thee as the apple of an eye! And then again, that sweet, tender child, who is as a sister to thee, consoles me. She it is who hast just written to Eran, telling him of your illness and bidding him not to let the sisters know. Dear Caro, she is well aware how easily sisters are made anxious. How I love her; how rejoiced I am to know that you are near her; how I bless God for it! What would become of you in your Hôtel de Port-Mahon, alone with men? Your friend would indeed be there; but whatever he may say, whatever he may do, a man can never replace a woman with the sick any more than with children. Weakness and suffering require those attentions, alleviations, comforts, which it is ours to invent.

28*th*. — Oh! letters, — letters of the heart, letters of sorrow; for it is all one! Kind aunt! She, like Caro, tells us that you have had three attacks, that you arrived at Paris pale, knocked up, out of spirits — all which rends my heart. God knows what I would not do rather than

know thee to be suffering in mind or body. But I can do nothing for either. I have only power to pray, and I do pray and hope, because faith is mighty. God is our strong help, this I feel experimentally. Oh, if, as Saint Paul says, we had hope in this life only, we should be the most miserable of all creatures!

Here is Lucy, my goddaughter, come to bid me good-night. I must first caress her a little, then comes the Catechism. I like teaching children, like opening their little minds to see what perfumes are enclosed in these flower-buds. In Lucy I find a penetration, a memory, and a gentleness of character, which render the child plastic to my touch. I shall be able to teach her to know God, the only indispensable knowledge in this sad and swift life, as I believe M. de Lamennais calls it.

My catechising over, I am going to read a sermon; we are in Lent, a season when the soul feeds more than ever on holy things. Besides, I need them as a counterpoise to the griefs, alarms, anxieties, which weigh my heart down. Oh, my friend, why hast not thou recourse to this; why dost thou not get thyself raised by some heavenly influence? You would not then be so dejected; as it is, I believe you are unhappy in spite of your apparent happiness, and that this

is the cause of your illness. Most of our miseries come from the soul; thine, poor friend, is so sick, so sick! I know very well what would cure, or at all events relieve it, — you understand me: to make it once more become Christian, to bring it into relationship with God by the fulfilment of religious duties, to cause it to live by faith — in short, to establish it in a condition suited to its nature. Oh, then would come peace and happiness (in so far as they are possible to man), and the tranquillity of order, — a rare and excellent thing, only to be obtained by the subjection of our passions, as we see exemplified in the saints.

20*th*. — Two letters written to-day; one to Marie, the other to Irène, my Lisle friend. I owe her this token of remembrance and gratitude for her long-standing and constant friendship. It was she who wrote to me first, seven years ago, I think, after a few days' acquaintanceship at Lisle. Friendship soon springs up between women: a smile, a word, a nothing is enough to bring about amicable ties; but then, they are, generally speaking, mere bows of ribbon,— which leads to the saying that women do not really love each other. I cannot tell; some may love for a day or two, more or less, and yet love very much; but I have always dreaded such

ephemeral affections for myself and my friends. Nothing so sad as a dead thing in one's heart, as making the heart a coffin. Hence whenever I feel or see an affection threatening to go out I make all haste to revive it.

Accordingly, I am about to write to L. *of the mountains*, who seemed to me slightly changed. Perhaps it was pre-occupation, company, circumstances ; but she has left in my heart fears and doubts as regards her friendship. And yet, when I recollect the long tears that rolled down her cheeks last year when I left her, these fears vanish from my mind.

As to what are called acquaintances, I have plenty of them, and I know not how I make them ; I, who hardly ever leave my desert, and who, like Paul the hermit, would willingly live a hundred years in my retreat without inquiring at all how the world goes on. But God wills it thus, no doubt, for some purpose to me unknown. Providence orders all things, even the very least events, and therefore one accepts.

I have just been reading the story of the child raised up by Elisha. Oh, if I knew some prophet, some one who restored life and health, I would go like the Shunammite to prostrate myself at his feet !

30*th*. — This fine weather, and mild air, what

good they would do thee! I keep thinking of this, and shall regret the whole of this spring that I cannot see thee inhale it here. It would be so much better for thee than Paris. Why cannot you live with us, my friend! What a sorrow to see thee banished as it were from the family circle! Oh, Fortune, Fortune! what can she not inflict upon us when she is unpropitious? We have suffered much from her in thee.

31*st*. — I do not know who or what made me fling my copy-book under the counterpane of thy bed; I break off and hide the moment any one enters the room. I only write for thee, and in order to do this avail myself of the first excuse that I hit upon: now it is a letter to be written, now some notes that I am taking; but what always answers the purpose is the copy-book filled with poems, that Papa has asked me for. I write out three or four verses a day, and when Papa comes into my room and says, "What are you about?" I reply, "The copy-book." This is not an untruth, only I am writing two copy-books, and I take more delight in the one than the other. However, I shall finish Papa's, since he wishes it; the dear father well deserves that I should please him too, — he who would give me the moon.

Why cannot I give every one a something or other, some mark of affection to brothers and sister, to all I love? Let me see and make my will. To thee, my Journal, my penknife, the 'Confessions of Saint Augustine;' to Papa, my Poems; to Erembert, 'Lamartine;' to Mimi, my rosary, my little knife, my 'Way of the Cross,' my 'Meditations of Father Judde;' to Louise, the 'Spiritual Conflict;' to Mimi, again, my 'Imitation;' to Antoinette, the 'Soul on Fire;' to thee, too, my little strong-box for thy private papers, on condition you burn all mine should any be found therein. Why, as for that, what could you make of them? They only concern one's own conscience, are secrets between the soul and God; a few letters of advice from M. Bories, and from that good curé from Normandy, of whom I have spoken to you. I keep them, both as mementos and for use; they are *my papers*, but they must never see the day. If, therefore, what I am now writing playfully comes to pass, and you do become my executor, remember to burn all that strong-box contains.

2*nd April.* — "If the inevitable necessity of dying saddens human nature, the promise of a future immortality encourages and consoles our faith, since for Thy faithful people, Lord, to die

is not to lose life." This, my friend, is what I read in the Preface of 'The Dead,' and have thought of the whole of this day on which our mother died. We heard mass for her this morning. You were hearing it, too, in Paris, and I beheld thee with satisfaction engaged in this communion of prayer. I thought that my mother was watching thee especially, and sending thee down some grace from heaven, as Rachel would have done to her son Benjamin. Wert thou not her youngest and best loved child? I can remember that you sometimes made me jealous, that I used to envy the endearments, bonbons, and kisses which you got in larger measure than I. This was because I was a little older, and I was not then aware that our age modified the expression of affections, and that caresses and pettings, the milk of the heart, are the portion of the youngest and least. But my vexation did not last long, and as soon as reason began to dawn I took to being very fond of thee, which still goes on. Mamma was pleased with this union, this fraternal love between us, and delighted to see thee on my knees, child on child, heart on heart, as now, only with feelings fuller grown. If from that other life they watch what goes on upon earth, my mother must be pleased that we

love each other thus; that this affection is profitable, sweet, consolatory to us; that we give each other advice, warning, prayers, spiritual help.

But you no longer pray; you . . . . This is sad. There is no day that passes, this day more especially, without my feeling the power of faith over my soul, either in calming, controlling, or elevating it. This morning I was suffering: death, tears, separations, our whole sad life, were killing me; and, over and above, apprehensions, terrors, heartrendings, a demon's talons in my soul, — the beginning of I know not what anguish. Well, then, at present I am calm, and this I owe to faith, to nothing but faith, to an act of faith. I think of my mother, of death, of eternity, without distress or terror. Over a gloomy ground floats a divine calm, a sweet serenity that God alone can create. It is in vain that I have tried other things on like occasions; nothing human consoles or sustains the spirit.

> The child must have its mother,
> My soul must have its God.

3rd. — I was expecting letters from Paris, tidings of thee, but nothing came. What is to be said or thought? Mere *who knows*, conjectures, doubts. How sad doubt is, whether

to heart or mind! May God deliver us from it! Papa is gone to Andillac to see if the carrier has left anything there. I am waiting here in my little room, my resting-place. Oh, how weary I am! 't is soul-fatigue, but what matters it? I will work, I will write, I will not give in. Some one is expecting a letter. I had letters the day before yesterday from Félicité and Marie de Thézac. There is no lack of any letters but thine.

4th. — It is cold, it rains, it snows. A low, doleful wind sings at my window and makes me inclined to answer it; but what can one say to the wind, to a little agitated air? Alas! how often we are nothing more! Last night I had a remarkable dream. I found myself with M. de Lamennais. I spoke to him of thee, and of his earlier and later works; we kept up an animated conversation, and were far from agreeing, for he did not agree with himself. He contradicted all that he had formerly said. And I was pitying him, the poor wanderer! "Oh, you detest the heretic." "No, Sir, no indeed; you occasion me a deep sorrow, you seem to me a wandering star, but one that cannot fail to reappear in heaven." And upon that, he, the room in which we were, and I, all got confused in the chaos of sleep; but this much I

remembered, and all to-day I have had this man of genius in my head. When I reflect that you lived with him, and received his instructions, the interest I take in him becomes intense. Oh, how much this man occupies my mind, how I think about his salvation, how I implore it of God, how I lament his lost, his holy renown! It often occurs to me to write to him without giving my name; to let him hear a mysterious voice, all tears and entreaties. Folly and audacity this on my part; but yet one woman did encounter him in the interests of hell, to complete the reprobation of the priest; might not another draw near to him in the cause of heaven?

They are burying a worthy and holy man, the *Durel* of Lentin, del Mas des Mérix;[1] a model peasant, simple, kind, religious, respectful, taking off his hat to us to the very ground. He was one of those whom one could not help saluting as though one beheld virtues personified. These excellent men are rare; they go, and we see none like them come in their place.

5*th*. — Letter from Mademoiselle Martin; arrival of M. de Faramond; events of the morning. I must think about dinner and helping Mimi.

[1] The hamlet of Mérix.

6th. — Nineteen years ago to-day, was born on the bank of the Ganges a fragile little child, who was called Caroline. She comes, she grows up, gets beautiful, and the sweet young girl is now thy betrothed. I admire thy happiness, my friend, and how careful God has been of it in giving thee such a companion, giving thee this Eve come out of the East with so many graces and charms! And then I see in her such admirable moral qualities, so much sweetness, goodness, devotedness, candour; everything about her is so beautiful and so good that I look upon her as a heavenly treasure for thee. May you be united, be happy! We have just been hearing mass to your intention, and, according to the expression of Mademoiselle Martin, asking God for Caroline's happiness and for the graces necessary to the new life that is about to open out to her. Let us, oh, do let us have Heaven on our side; let us ask God for what we need, we poor and impotent creatures! The good pastor will say another mass for you to-morrow; he proposed this himself. "One must pray, too, for M. Maurice. . . ." Consequence this of the idea of the nosegay, presentiment of your union.

7th. — "Where do you think I have just come from, dear Marie? Oh, you would never

guess; from warming myself in the sunshine in a cemetery. A gloomy hearth this, if you will, but where one finds one's self surrounded by one's kindred. There I was with my grandfather, my uncles, my ancestors; with a whole crowd of beloved dead. My mother alone was wanting; she, alas! reposes rather far from here. But why did I find myself there? Do you suppose that I am a lover of tombs? Not more so than others, my dear. The fact was, I had been this morning to confession, and as there were people waiting there, and I felt cold in the church, I went out and sat in the sunny churchyard; and there reflections arose, and thoughts tending to the other world, and the account we must give to God. What a good book of self-examination a tomb is! How many truths one reads there; what light one finds; how the illusions and dreams of life, and all its enchantments, get dispelled! When we go away hence, the world is fairly judged; we cling to it less.

Our foot on a grave, we care less for the earth.

There is no dancer but would throw off her ball dress and wreath of flowers; no young girl but would forget her beauty; no one, in short,

but would return improved from this land of the dead.

"But what is this I am saying to my dear invalid? Forgive me, dear friend! I ought to enliven, to amuse you, to sing you a strain like that of the *piping bullfinch;* but I am a bird that lights everywhere, and warbles according to feeling and place. It is for you, my kind one, to listen to me indulgently, and not to wonder too much at what may spring from my heart, often little in harmony with yours. In spite of our sympathy, there are in us differences of character and education which would make me tremble for myself and for our friendship if I did not believe it was the work of God, and rested on nothing human. Not to know, never to have seen, and yet to love each other, is this not wholly spiritual? Accordingly I have for you a quite sacred affection; something in my heart which is only tenderness and prayer for you.

"How I would I could see you happy! Your happiness . . . who can make it? Where do you believe it to lie? Tell me, and let me help you to find it. It is for this only that I am your friend. Let us see, let us look about. What a search! Did you ever read the story of the king mourning for the loss of his wife, to whom a philosopher promised to raise her up,

provided there could be found three thoroughly happy persons whose names might be engraved on the tomb of the queen? Never could they be found, — which doubtless signifies that our soul would remain for ever dead if human happiness were essential to its life. But, on the contrary, it must go out of the boundary of this world, and seek beyond, — that is in God, in a Christian life, — for what the world does not possess. The world contains no happiness. Those who have loved it best tell us this. It diverts, but can never fill the empty heart. *Oh, the world has indeed gay festivals that attract; but, be sure of this, you would but feel yourself alone and chilled in the midst of the joyous crowd.* In these candid expressions, this avowal of a lover of the world, we have the world's sentence pronounced. How much sadness in this isolation, this chill, this frost, of which the heart is conscious, while surrounded by pleasures and by those who partake of them! This alone would make me give them up, if ever they came in my way.

" Do you know, dear Marie, that you do me good by your reflections, that you make me acquainted with the world by your letters, which are pictures, and that you greatly detach me from all my illusions, from all that does not make

us happy? Your experience instructs me, and I bless God a hundred times for my retired and tranquil life. Otherwise, what danger! I feel within my heart all that I observe in others; there is the same leaven in us all, but it rises differently according to circumstances and will, for the will goes for much in the development of the heart. One can help it to be good or bad, weak or strong, much in the same way as a child one is bringing up. Accordingly it is not by our tendencies, but by our works, that the Gospel tells us we are to be judged. Oh, when one thinks of that judgment, well may one pay strict attention to one's life, one's heart, there are so many perils within and without! My God! how it makes one tremble and take every precaution, and almost desire to quit the world altogether.

Alas! my spirit dreads a stain contracted from the ground!
How shall it guard the robe of white that was its heavenly dower,
Here where we walk in mire and clay, and dust is flying round,
Which clings to everything it meets, — yes, even to the flower!

"There is something for your *ejaculatory prayers;* I am very happy to furnish you with

any such. You might find holier ones, but do not say them thus aloud in company; my vanity hears you, — have a care.

"This reminds me of a sorrow and a regret. I see that my packet for the Isle of France was all left with you; my poor cousin will have died believing that I had forgotten him. It is this alone that I am sorry for. Else I only congratulate myself upon a chance which has gained me your friendship. Since then you have loved me, you say. Why did not you tell me so before? It has taken many days, many events, many different things to link us together, but when shall we meet? It is not your fault if it be not soon, and I know not how to thank you enough for your gracious offers. How obliged I should be to you! But I cannot yet accept, not having settled the time for my journey to Paris. I shall only go for the marriage, or soon after. They are waiting for papers from Calcutta, which will decide the affair at once.

"How I long, how I do long to know if my brother will have a suitable position! I am very anxious about his future, about his health more especially. That precious health, what alarm it causes! There he is ill again; he has had three attacks and his pallor has returned. They assure us that he is better, that the fever is leaving

him ; but I am afraid they are deceiving us, and I now beg of you not to deceive us, — to have the kindness to send some one to see him and to tell me openly how things really are. It was only too true what he told you about the doctor forbidding him to go out. I, too, should forbid him that bad Paris atmosphere, and, above all, emotion. It is that that kills him. Let his friends avoid anything that excites his feelings. I am much obliged to M. de M—— for the visit he has kindly paid him, and for your friendly interest in him, which I hope you will maintain.

"But now let us speak of you and of your dear health, which also interests me as you know ; but you cannot know how much, nor all the pleasure that these words gave me : 'I am better, much better!' Oh, that this improvement may last! that it may go on increasing, so that when I see you I may find you recovered, dear invalid, — *recovered*, do you hear ? You must labour at this, follow the prescriptions of your physician, occupy yourself exclusively with your health ; only, for my sake, cultivate friendship a little, which is, besides, a consolation for much. Then, God helping, we shall see if things do not go on better. Do not forget prayer either, — that best remedy for the soul ; if my book pleases you, read it, and your *guardian angel*

will be pleased. What a name that is for me to take! but I accept everything from you, and bless God if I can be of use to you under any denomination whatever.

"Do you know that fever positively inspires you, and that your 'Hymn to Suffering' has much struck me? It is a Byronian strain. But do not go and choose such subjects for poetry, I pray you, or represent yourself as crucified on that hopeless Calvary, where sufferings say to you, *Thou will not escape us, fatality stamped thee in thy cradle, thou belongest to us.* It is true, we are all born as it were dedicated to misery. Every one suffers from something; but, like the first martyr, if we be Christians while we suffer we see heaven opened. Oh, faith, faith! nothing else comforts me and makes me comprehend life. This is speaking to you without any reserve; 't is because I love you. Adieu! I return you a kiss as tender as your own."

This is what I was writing this morning to a friend recently made, of whom I am already very fond. The tone I adopt with her is not that of women's letters in general, has none of our light chat; but it is exacted, it is inspired by what she expects from me. Alas, alas! poor sick soul!

What is shyness, and whence does it arise? I have been trying to find out; I have asked myself what it was that made one blush, prevented one speaking or appearing before others, and it still remains a mystery to me. This very morning, having a word or two to say to M. le Curé, who most certainly is not alarming, I could not make up my mind to go into the sacristy. What folly! one is aware of it and suffers from it; I don't know what it is that chokes one, compresses one so that the blood seems to leave off circulating and to rush to the heart, which keeps beating furiously.

8th. — Poor Lili! she is dying; I have just heard that she is dying of consumption. Heart-sorrows have killed her; she is sinking beneath the many blows that have shaken her these ten years past. It is from Paul that we got the melancholy tidings, and he asks one of us to go to the sufferer, who wishes for us. We shall go next week, after Easter. This is Palm Sunday. I have just placed mine in the chapel, you know where, below Saint Theresa. It will be withered next year, alas! and so will many things besides! I must write to Louise.

9th. — A letter from Caroline at last! I know, I hear, I read that you are going on quite well. What delight! but must I also read,

"Maurice is sad, he has an under-current of sadness that I strive to dispel, I read it in his eyes"? . . . My poor friend, what can be the matter with thee, if it be not fever that oppresses thee? Art not thou satisfied with thy life, never so sweet before? Art not thou happy with that good and beautiful girl who loves thee, with your union drawing near, with a future to look to? . . . Oh, I do believe that nothing pleases thee; a charm once tasted, it is over, exhausted. Perhaps I am mistaken, but I seem to see in thee a something which poisons thee, thins thee, will kill thee if God do not deliver thee from it. How you grieve me! How you do grieve me! If I could be of use in any way, — but we are far apart! Else you would tell me what ails you, and what is the meaning of this depression that you took with you hence. Is it regret at leaving us? That is a sorrow, but not a consuming one; and then to leave sisters for a betrothed, — to go from the sweet to the sweeter, is a thing easily got over. But I will not inquire or say so much. We shall see, alas! we shall see. I have mournful forebodings.

Swallows, oh, swallows flying by! The first I have seen. I am so fond of these lovers of the spring, these birds that follow after the sweet sun, — after songs, perfumes, verdure. I

do not know what there is in their wings that makes me so delighted in watching them as they fly ; I could spend a long time thus. I think of the past, of the time when we used to pursue them into the hall, to lift a plank of the garret in order to see their nest, to touch their eggs, their young ones ; pleasant memories of childhood, with which everything here is fraught if one comes to look at it. Walls, flowers, birds, all have these associations. Some little chickens have just been hatched, and are chirping away by the fireside. That, too, gives pleasure. Every birth brings joy with it.

10*th.* — The date has been put ; one must therefore write a something. What will it be ; what will this sheet of paper bear ? Nothing at all ; no one has come, nothing has been done, nothing happened in our solitude. But for the song of a bird or two, sound of life there has been none, and a splendid sun has brooded over the stillness ; I, sitting in my room, knitted away at a pair of stockings for Jeanne-Marie, reading the while. I was reading about the wonderful epoch of Saint Louis, that period when men saw so great a king and such great saints.

21*st.* — I come from Alby ; I have just left our dear Lili in the churchyard. What a sorrow, what regrets, what a blank, what memories !

My God ! to see those one loves die ; to say to one's self, It is all over, thou wilt never see her more, no, never ; eternity between us ! but a blessed eternity I hope. This it is that consoles. My friend, what would become of us but for this, but for a little faith within the soul ? It is that which sustains it, prevents it from falling into an abyss of grief or despair. Lili, my holy Lili, how blessed I believe her to be ! how I seem to see her in infinite glory, unchangeable peace, assured repose. It is she who is pitying us — we, her friends — whom she sees in this poor world, in pain, agitation, anguish ! Oh, how I saw her suffer ; but how serenely, poor martyr ! Accordingly every one called her a saint ; they read it on her face, which became quite heavenly and beautiful after her death.

I did not see her then, but a short time before. Kneeling by her bedside, I read her Bossuet's prayers for the dying, which I had taken with me on purpose. When I left on Holy Thursday, I was well aware that it was to see her die, and thought of those provisions for her soul, a last sign, alas ! of my affection. I took this book with me, too, for always I think of thee, and I wanted to write down the death ; but it was impossible to do anything but remain and pray with the sufferer. On my arrival I

found thy letter which Mimi had forwarded me. What a delight at any other time! You are better; you are happy, alive, — thoroughly alive, you tell me. But this other death spoils all, — saddens me so much that I am not susceptible of any joy. It is not that I am in tears, or violent grief: it is a calm, internal sorrow, — a grief that I know not how to describe; but assuredly it is grief, for I loved Lili, and I have lost her. . . . It was on Tuesday, the 17th of April, at midnight; I had left her at four o'clock. Papa would not let me see her afterwards, and carried me away to Madame Combes', where for two days I met with the most cordial hospitality. Nérine de Tonnac, my old friend, was with me, my kind companion by night and day. I am very grateful to her for all she did for me on this occasion. I must write to Caro, then I will return here if I can.

25*th*. — I was unable to do so for three days, and even now it is but for a moment that I have run off here. Lili, I have Lili always in my thoughts, and feel impelled to speak about her. When I hear the bells, I recall the holy prayers she used to put up in church, and even here in this little room; when I look at the sky, I remind myself that she is there, and ask her for many things. Friends have no doubt much

power with God. Here comes M. F——, a visit I rather like ; we shall speak of Lili. To-morrow is a day of great solemnity at Andillac, a first communion. Augustine, young as she is, is of the number of happy children. Some time hence she would indeed have been better informed, but M. le Curé prefers innocence to knowledge, and I hold that he is right. The worthy man will have scope for all his good-shepherd zeal, all his tender charity, to-morrow. It is a blessed day for him too.

29*th*. — What a sweet, simple, pious, and touching ceremony ! I have only time to say this, and to declare that, of all festivals, the one I delight in most is a first communion in a country district, — God bestowing Himself simply on children. Miou, the little Françonil de Gaillard, and Augustine, were exquisite, both in innocence and beauty. How pretty they looked under their little white veils, when they returned weeping from the holy table ! Divine tears ! Children united to God, who can tell what was passing at that moment in their souls ? M. le Curé was admirable in his unction and gentleness ; it was the Saviour saying to children, " Come unto me." Oh, how lovingly he addressed them ! and then how he recommended to their care that white robe, that innocence

with which they were clothed! Poor children, what risks before them! I kept saying to myself, "Which of you will tarnish it first?" They are not going to Paris, indeed; but earth is everywhere soiled, everywhere evil is found, seduces and leads away.

2nd May. — Yesterday, the 1st of May, I was unable to write anything, and yet it was a beautiful day both on high and here; bright sunshine, great chorus of birds, and three letters; Antoinette, Marie de Thézac, and Caro met in my grasp. I love them all and their letters, but Caro's seem to me sister's, the same tenderness and kind feeling for thee and for us. It is charming to have friends of the kind, devoted and disinterested; they are not often to be found. Since Victor and Philibert left, we have had no heart friends. Then, again, the Pastor is quite devoted to us; he came to spend the day, and showed himself cheerful and obliging. In the evening I was better; quiet cheerfulness does one good, and I like all who introduce it here. On this occasion I repaid it with a little tribute of amiability. This is how it was: M. le Curé has charged himself with the whole decoration of the church, for the arrival of the Archbishop who is coming over for a confirmation. He wanted mottoes, asked me

for some, and I could not say him no. I don't like refusing. It teased me a little, for I am not fond of mottoes, which are always stupid things. I made mine in *patois* to save the dignity of French — and, besides, it is the language of our country districts. The day before yesterday —— wrote to me. I am not satisfied about her health. Oh, the harm our passions do us, how they shatter body and soul! There is no recovery from them, unless God helps us. Will He help her? My advice has but little effect. Then who knows what thou art doing, for thy part? All these things distress me sorely.

May 3rd. — We are just come from the village, from paying a visit to Romiguières, who is very ill. I fear that he will not get over it. Thus our neighbours are leaving us, one after the other. After the Vialarette, this good man, who was another of our retainers. I regret them; these worthy souls are better friends than is commonly supposed, or than we meet in the world. Devotedness is not always the attribute of the highest rank. Thus ends this book, which is tolerably filled with mourning, three deaths so near each other. My God! who knows which of us will follow next? At least these three were ready to give their great ac-

count, were good Christians, good souls. Romiguières himself requested to have M. le Curé sent for in the night. Having received the *viaticum*, he soon became delirious.

Go under lock and key, little book of mine.

VII.

Evening of the 3rd of May (1838).

NOTHING of any interest since morning, except the birth of a lamb, and this new book, which begins to the song of the nightingale and in presence of two vases of flowers that perfume my little room. It is a delight to write in the midst of such fragrance, to pray, to think, to let the soul have its own way. This morning I brought in these flowers, to give my table the look of an altar, with a cross in the middle, and to keep the month of May here. I take pleasure in this devotion. *Es neyt.*[1]

5th. — I am tired of writing: two long letters have made my hand ache, and so I shall not put down much here; but I want to note a beautiful day, calm, sweet, fresh — a true spring morning. Everything is singing and blossoming. We have just returned from a walk, Papa, I, and my dog, — Lili's pretty little pet: dear little creature! it never leaves me; when I sit down, it jumps upon my knee, — when I walk, it follows me closely. One would say that it understood

[1] It is night.

me, that it knew I was to replace its mistress. We brought back white, violet, and blue flowers, which have made us a beautiful nosegay. I broke off two to send them to E—— in a letter : they are *Ladies of eleven o'clock ;* probably they get their name from opening then, as other flowers do at different hours, charming country timepieces, floral clocks, marking such sweet hours. Who knows if the birds do not consult them, do not regulate their going to bed, their meals, their meetings, according to the opening and shutting of flowers ? Why not ? Everything harmonises in nature ; secret relations unite the eagle and the blade of grass, and the angels and ourselves in the order of mind. I shall have a nest under my window ; a turtle-dove has just been cooing on the acacias, where there was a nest last year. Perhaps it is the same bird. The spot suited her, and, like a good mother, she once more trusts her cradle to it.

7th. — They came this morning at four o'clock to ask Papa for planks to make poor Romiguières' coffin. We are losing all our friends of the Pausadou. Two deaths in a few days ! How sudden, both in the case of La Vialarette and in this !

After having written to Marie, Antoinette,

and Caro, night has come, and I am going hence, but feeling more tranquil, more rested than when I came. Nothing does me so much good as writing, because then I forget myself. Prayer has the same calming effect, and even better, since it infuses a certain sweetness into the soul.

12*th*. — For five days I have not written a line here, and meanwhile leaves, flowers, roses, have come out. There is one just under my forehead, which perfumes me, the first rose of spring. I like to mark the day of this fair arrival. Who can tell how many springs I thus find again in books, in some rose-leaf, on which I date the day and year? One of these rose-leaves wended its way to the Isle of France, where it gave great pleasure to that poor Philibert. Alas! like him, it will have disappeared now. Though I regret him, it is not that exactly, but I know not what, that saddens me and keeps me languid to-day. Poor soul, poor soul! what ails thee, then? what dost thou want? Where is thy remedy to be found? Everything grows green, blossoms, sings; the whole air is balmy, as if it proceeded from a flower. Oh, it is so beautiful! Let us go out. No, I should be alone, and a beautiful solitude is not good for us. Eve showed us this in the

garden. What is to be done, then? Shall I read, write, pray; place a basket of sand on my head, like the good hermit, and walk? Yes; exertion, labour is wanted to occupy this body that injures the soul. I have kept too quiet today, which is bad for me, which gives time to settle to a certain depression within me.

Why is it that I am depressed? Have I not all I want, all I love, except thee? Sometimes I think that it is the idea of the convent that makes me so, that attracts and saddens me. I envy the happiness of a Saint Theresa, of Saint Paula at Bethlehem. If I could but find myself in some holy solitude! . . . the world is not my sphere. My future, too, would then be settled; now I do not know what it may be. What sort of a sister-in-law shall we have? I have two friends, who, after their father's death, received their dismissal from the old home; and I find that so bitter! And then, again, there is heaven, that is more certainly secured in retirement. These are my reasons, not thine: let us separate just now. I will not say anything to thee till I am more tranquil; I should say nothing right. Adieu until . . .

Here I am this evening with three letters, from Euphrasie, Marie, and Lucy, — young girls very unlike each other, but having each her spe-

cial charm. We women are as varied as flowers, and we are not sorry for it.

14*th*. — No writing yesterday, it was Sunday. To-day is Saint Pacôme, the father of monks. I have just read his life, which is very beautiful. These lives of recluses have a charm for me, especially such of them as are not quite beyond imitation. These last one admires as one would the Pyramids. In general, however, one gets some good from them when one reads them with discrimination ; even the most exaggerated actions are heroic, and encourage devotedness and the admiration of what is lofty.

But in spite of this, for many people the ' Lives of the Saints ' do seem to me dangerous reading. I should not recommend them to a young girl, nor even to some who are not young. Books have so much power over the heart, which sometimes goes astray even from piety. Alas ! what an example of this we have seen in poor C. ! . . . How much care should be taken of a young person, of her books, her pen, her companions, her devotions ! All these require the tender watchfulness of a mother. If I had had mine, I can recall much I used to do at the age of fourteen which she would not have allowed. I would have done anything in God's name, would have flung myself into a furnace ; and

certainly the *good God* did not require that: He does not will the harm done to one's health by that ardent but mistaken piety which, while destroying the body, often leaves many defects of character untouched. Accordingly, Saint Francis de Sales used to say to the nuns who asked his leave to walk barefoot, "Change your heads, and keep your shoes."

15*th*. — A visitor came yesterday, to cut our talk short; I take it up again on account of an anxiety I have in my heart. It is caused by your letter, which renews my alarm about your health. Why are you taking ass's milk? why do you say that the spring will set you up again? Is it not so? You are really less well than you told us at first. People in health do not talk of remedies. They are deceiving us; you deceive us. The air of Paris does not agree with thee: it will kill thee; it killed poor Victor. I tremble lest there should be this additional resemblance between you. My God, remove these sad ideas from me! My friend, I should much like to have a letter from thee; the one of to-day was for everybody, and it is the private and confidential that I crave. Affection feeds upon this.

I have been here some time, but Mimi is alone, so I am going to join her. I was amusing myself in reading old letters. Papa has

arrived this evening with a knapsack full of books; Eran is come from the fair with pigs, "échaudés," and cheese; a *peillarot*[1] and some swallows have passed, — pretty well for a Cayla day. They are now speaking about supper. Oh mouth, mouth!

16*th*. — We are all going in a caravan to Frauseilles, to see our bell cast. This expedition amuses me a good deal; I am off.

17*th*. — Oh, it was not worth while going! We saw nothing at all. The bell was melted and cast under ground; nothing was visible but the furnace, flame, and smoke. However, there were crowds of people from Andillac and the environs; and what amused me was to see the inquisitive ones still more taken in than myself, and say to them, *Qu'abés bist?*[2]

I am not in a mood for writing; there 's a wind blowing hard enough to sweep away everything, — even ideas. But for this I might tell all that occurred to me near that furnace in the way of religious, cheerful, and sad thoughts; and how many years, ages, baptisms, funerals, weddings, fires, I fused with that bell. When it comes to an end, who knows what will have ended both in Andillac and the world at large?

[1] An itinerant vender of thread, needles, etc.

[2] What have you seen?

The age of bells is numbered by centuries, endless time, unless there come an accident or a revolution. Accordingly we — all who stood there — shall never see it re-cast. That alone is solemn, *never to see again what one sees now.* It was thus I thought of the church of Frauseilles, where I knelt for a short time, and on whose doors, closed on me *for ever*, I looked long and steadfastly; for in all probability I shall never return there. How sad those words must be applied to places to which our heart clings! If I were to see the doors of the Cayla close for ever, the garden door, Papa's door, the door of the little room! . . . Oh, what must it be with the door of heaven!

Why art not thou here? we would share two apples given me by Julie de Gaillard, whom I went to see as a countrywoman. The good soul did not know how to welcome me enough, or to express the pleasure my visit gave her. My expedition to Frauseilles was not lost time. I gave pleasure, I caressed a little child in its cradle; I saw, as I passed the cemetery, the burial-place of our old Clairac friends, marked out by an iron cross. Nothing more is to be seen; the land of the dead is soon reduced to a level. What signify appearances? The soul, the life, is not there. Oh, my God! that would

be too heartbreaking! I thought much of thee during all this, because there was a troop of curés who all inquired for thee, and it gave me much pleasure to see thee so beloved by the Church. Adieu! You see that I have said nothing.

This evening at ten o'clock. — It is dark night, but one can still hear the crickets, the brook, and a nightingale — only one — who sings, sings, sings in the gloom. How well this music accompanies the evening prayer!

18*th.* — No possibility of getting out; it rains. It is a day for reading and writing, in lieu of our long walks, our sweet spring occupation. One is out at every moment; we lead the life of birds, in the open air under the shade. This is in itself a delight; and then what varied pleasures at every step, if only one looks about one! Yesterday Mimi brought me magnificent ribbon grass, with white and green stripes, lustrous, satin like; one might have tied it under one's chin. I put it into a vase, where I still admire my somewhat faded ribbon. They would be prettier growing; these fashionable articles ought not to be taken out of the woods.

I should like very much to know something of botany; it is a charming study in the country, and full of enjoyment. One grows intimate with Nature, with the grasses, flowers, and

mosses, when one calls them by their proper names. Study botany, Maurice; you will teach it me. It would be very easy with a Flora. But when will you be here in spring? You only come later on; and it is not when winter has mowed down all the beauty of nature (according to the expression of our friend Saint Francis de Sales) that one can take to botanising. No more flowers then; and it is flowers that interest me, because they are so pretty on these green carpets. I should like to know their family, their tastes, what butterflies they love, what drops of dew they require, as well as their hidden virtues, that I might make use of them at need. Flowers are good for the sick. God fits his gifts for so many purposes! Everything is fraught with marvellous goodness. See the rose, which, after having given honey to the bee and sweetness to the air, affords us a lotion which is most soothing to tender eyes. I remember having put compresses of it on yours when you were little. Every year we make bottles of this rose-water, which our neighbours come to ask for.

But I said this was a day for writing. Writing what? I have no idea, but I feel I could write. If I had but a plan, any fixed task! I should do a little of it daily, and that would be

good for me. The too full sometimes overflows ; it is better to make a channel for it. I hardly ever pour out anywhere but here, and not much even here because . . . paper flies. I fling it Paris-wards, but who knows where it may chance to fall ? Accordingly I often efface in reading over, as you will have seen in the last book. It was about E—— ; I had allowed myself to be carried away into too lively, nay, even false colouring. I found this out afterwards from her letters. Hers is a passionate kindness, without any rancour or bitterness ; open in her faults, she is a child with a heart of fire. I look upon our intimacy as very wonderful, as coming from God, and I attach myself to this soul confided to me by Him, which says to me, " Love me, help me to go to heaven ! " Oh ! I will do all I can to help her, I will always love her ; for a holy friendship is but an emanation from the charity that never dieth.

The nightingale of yesterday evening has been singing all the day long. What a throat he has ! If he were English I should say that he must have laid a wager.

19*th.* — Three letters and the arrival of Eliza. It is Louise, Marie, and Euphrasie who have written to us. That poor Euphrasie, so sad and heartbroken at the death of her dear aunt, excites

my compassion. Good, ardent, tender as her heart is, how much she will have to suffer now! Lili stood to her in the place of mother.

24*th.* — One word this evening that I have time, am alone, thinking of thee, and that it is the Ascension, a glorious, a holy day, when the soul rises, mounts to heaven. But no, I am very well contented here; methinks one can never wean one's self from writing. I am called away.

26*th.* — Two days between these lines, passed without writing to thee, and since have come letters, birds' nests, roses on the terrace, on my table, everywhere. A hundred things have arrived from Gaillac, — from a greater distance, news of the death of the Prince of Talleyrand; it was enough to make one write then or never, but we are making capes with Eliza, and the world might have gone by under our needle without our dropping it. What small things suffice one! I am amazed at it, but have not time to tell thee why.

Evening of the 27*th.* — The first *Angelus* rung by our new bell. I have just been listening to it at the dining-room window, and rose from table expressly for this pleasure, succeeded by so many different trains of thought that I love. A pious blending of joy, mourning, time, eternity, cradles, hearses, heaven, God! The

bell announces all these, and brought them all into my mind just now. Oh, especially, especially do I think of the first time it will toll! For whom? Shall I note it down; and in what page? Perhaps I shall not be here to note it. Which of the living can venture to say to himself, "I shall speak of such or such a one dead"? My God! we pass away so fast! And yet I am in good health; but I see flowers put quite fresh into a vase this morning, withered and dying this evening. So it is with us: the vase that contains our life does not hold more than for a day.

Visits from curés: of the Canton, of Vieux, and ours — three very different men; the one without any wit at all, the other having flashes of it now and then, and the third keeping it to himself. They told us all sorts of things connected with the Church, interesting enough to hear and to reply to for the moment. But in general it is variety that makes conversation pleasant; the discussion of a thousand different topics constitutes easy chit-chat, that rare thing. No one here can speak of anything but his own speciality, like the Auvergnats of their country. The mind stays at home as well as the heart.

Eliza has just left us, to my great regret. All departures are saddening; to console me to-

morrow I have a very tender and affectionate letter under my eyes and in my heart. It is not from thee, but from E——, who always tells me in a thousand ways that she loves me, that she suffers in mind and body, and that *I know how to throw some flowers on the too often barren hours of her life*. Poor friend, poor woman! how happy I consider myself to be of some use to her! Accordingly I am going to give her all I can of sweet, consoling, and piously soothing, — all the flowers possible. How she suffers! how much harm some one has done her! how that inclines me to try and restore her, to point out remedies! I do not despair of it, for God is helping us. He is evidently coming to the rescue of this poor soul. From letter to letter her disposition seems to improve, her faith to revive, her heart to turn more heavenwards; and that gives me every reason to hope. Each morning she says a prayer to the Virgin, that I sent her. "At eight o'clock," she tells me, "we shall be together before God," for I say the same prayer for her at the same hour with full confidence. The blessed Virgin who has cured thee is well able to cure her too. There lies my hope and my remedy. . . . Above, above! Ah! what do we find here below? All we can do is to cause ourselves suffering.

Then she goes on to ask me for a little poetry, and I shall send her some ; I grant everything to the sick. She wants it that she may set it to music, — a still more intimate spiritual bond between us; spring and the nightingale, the musician and the poet, so methinks it should always be. But, alas ! it is so long since I have written anything ; and it is not easy to succeed, to attain to the beautiful, which is so high and so far from our poor mind ! One feels that it is made for us, that we have once reached it, that this grandeur was our own, and that we are now no longer anything more than dwarfs in intellect. Oh, the fall, the fall, that everywhere one meets traces of ! I could continue, if I were not obliged to go and lay out the table. Jeanne-Marie is at the fair, happier than . . .

Than may be struck out. I don't know what I was about to say when I left my book in the lurch. I return to it this evening to speak about a letter from Félicité which says, " Maurice still coughs." Ever since I feel that cough in myself ; *I have a pain in my brother's chest.* Oh, when shall I be easy ! when shall I be so about the dear health, and the dear soul which is sick too ! The one does not depend upon thyself ; the other does, and yet you let me go on always suffering, always trembling for what interests me most. Adieu, good-night, naughty one that I love !

30*th*. — Is it the nosegays that have attracted so many bees, and turned my room into a hive? Ever since the morning there has been nothing but a buzzing and a sound of wings that I do not dislike. I am fond of bees, and would willingly let them take up their quarters in my room, were it not for the sting, which spoils the poetic insect. Yesterday I got a good hearty sting, which makes me rather shy of bees, and forces me, too, to admit that what makes honey may often be itself very wicked.

31*st*. — It is this evening leaning on my window, with the nightingale singing and in sight of my acacias all blossom and fragrance, that I bid adieu to the month of May, sweet month, all flowers and verdure. Alas! everything comes to an end. It is the end, too, of the month of Mary, — beautiful spring-tide devotion that it is!

1*st of June*. — Spent the day at Cahuzac. Found, on my return, a report of the 'Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.' Any work that comes to the Cayla is an event, — more especially this, whose pages are compiled by saints in all parts of the world.

2*nd*. — M. Jules de Villefranche came to see us; he seemed to me grown, stronger, better looking than usual, with all his wonted gentleness. Always gay and chatty and asking for you. The good little youth!

Caro, the darling, has written to Mimi. What pleasure a letter from Paris gives us! But then, to find that you cough, that every one says so, that perhaps you cough more than they say, — how sad that is! And then you do not write to me, not a word about those private matters we wot of. Oh, we are separated indeed! I no longer know anything of thee. God knows what this costs me, and how I rank this silence among my trials. Poor heart, made on purpose for sufferings! It is their dwelling-place, and the whole of it is occupied just now. You are not their only cause; others come which no one guesses at, — griefs of the soul, which sometimes suffers strange things. But God sends them, permits them for our good. The saints tell us that it is fire that purifies, that re-melts. I believe it; we sometimes need to be put back into the crucible. Some one used to say to me, "At those times do as Saint Jerome did, — write." Let me write, then. Poetry occupies the mind most entirely. If I were to try?

O God, my God, whom I adore and love,
To say *my* God is joy all joys above, —
'T is heaven to me come down;
And never 'neath her bridal crown
Did queen beside her king more rapture prove.

The lowliest spot whence I can pray to Thee,
My Lord, my light, is worth all earth to me;
'Neath Thy all-seeing eye,
Like wild flower 'neath the sunny sky,
My soul expands, triumphant, happy, free.

What says my soul, and how dost thou reply,
What says to flame the flame, to dawn the sky,
What say two streams that meet,
What heavenly converse used to greet
Eve in the Garden when the Lord drew nigh?
. . . . . .

4th. — Flageolets, hautboys, big drums, nightingales, turtle-doves, loriots, blackbirds, chaffinches, pretty but grotesque symphony going on just now. It is the noisy music of Andillac in honour of the voting festival, which makes itself heard here and blends with that of the birds. At all events we have no lack of concerts in our fields; you like those of Paris without being always able to go to them, and I, without going, find myself at ours. Bird-notes on every side, from all the trees, and my charming musician, the nightingale of the other evening, still singing near the walnut-tree in the garden. These to me are pleasures, charms, I know not how to express. Hence some one said to me, "You are happily constituted for a country life." I feel that this is true, and

that my nature harmonises with flowers, birds, woods, the open air, the sky, — with all that lives out of doors, great or graceful works of God.

5*th.* — Oh, my God! my poor Louise. They have just told me that her father is dying or dead. Erembert, who was at Gaillac when this news came, saw Charles set off in a great hurry. What a good friend we are losing! what an excellent man! I am going to write to Louise.

A new book sent by Louise, the 'Meditations of Father Judde,' intended for nuns, a much-esteemed work that I have long wished for.

7*th.* — The death of M. de Bayne is certain to-day. There is another beautiful soul in heaven. He had an overflowing faith, he steeped everything in God. Then, again, he was an uncommon man as regards heart qualities; he could act the part of a friend, even against his own interests. His fortune has suffered from his devotedness in more than one case of misfortune.

8*th.* — Rousou! the servant of poor Lili! What pleasure this visit gave me! There are sad pleasures, such as speaking of the dead, seeing those they loved. She brought me a letter from Euphrasie, and one, too, from Louise, who tells me, "My father is very well." This

was almost on the eve of his death. Death comes quickly.

"I consider your enthusiam[1] for ugliness an extreme, however good the mood in which it seems to have seized you. The love of beauty is too natural in us to give way all of a sudden to the love of ugliness, except in the case of a miracle of conversion, such as we have seen among the saints. Sublime transformation, unveiling of the divine beauty which ravishes the soul, makes it forget all created beauty, nay, even hate that of the body as an occasion of sin. What renunciation, what refinement! which of us women has got to that? I, who am not pretty, cannot wish to be ugly. See whereabouts I am with my 'sublime contemplations;' they have not availed to lift me above vanity. Oh! do not let us speak of contemplating; it is the state of the blessed in heaven. To us poor sinners it is much if we know how to abase ourselves before God, to groan over our wants, and confess our faults to Him. It is grand to soar, but to look into one's own heart is very useful. One sees what is going on within — a knowledge indispensable to our spiritual progress. . . . In piety there is an ideal side, which fills the head with heaven,

[1] Extract of a letter to Madame A. de M.

angels, and seraphic notions, without making any impression on the heart, without inclining it to love, and to the practice of God's law. And without this, though 'we spoke with the tongue of angels,' we should only be *sounding brass and tinkling cymbals*. This passage of an Epistle has always struck me, and made me fear to speak of piety without having enough of it in my soul. But you always assure me that my letters do you good, — which encourages me, makes me think that it is God's will that I should write to you, renders me happy to believe that I give you some happiness.

"Even the throne has had its saints. We need only reflect upon Saint Louis to believe in the most difficult salvation. I take especial delight in the history of his sister, the blessed Isabella, — so humble in greatness, so withdrawn from pleasures, so innocent and so penitent, giving to the poor what she received for her own luxuries, the delight both of her brother and his court on account of the sweetness and graciousness that made every one mourn her when she retired into the house of Sainte-Claire, at Longchamp, to die. High and touching examples these of what grace can do in willing hearts, — of the triumph of faith over the world! In the matter of salvation, will is power, accord-

ing to the motto of Jacotot. Who was that Jacotot? A man, no doubt, who fully comprehended the might of the will, — that lever that can lift man up to heaven.

"You are right in saying that I am happily constituted for a country life. It is my proper place; elsewhere I should probably be less happy. In this I recognise the kind care of Providence, who orders everything lovingly for its creatures, and does not bid the violet be born in the streets. You may fancy me leaning upon my window, contemplating all this verdant valley in which the nightingale sings; then I go to look after my chickens, to sew, spin, embroider, in the great hall with Marie. And so, from one thing to another, the day passes by, and we reach evening without any *ennui*."

And now, my dear Maurice, I turn to thee! Alas! no, not yet! some one comes in. How many broken threads! Half of the one above is already far away; I should not join it together again but for a scrap of poetry that I am sending and want to leave here for thee. But, first of all, the lesson to my goddaughter Lucy.

Since that lesson, has come a sorrow. My dear little dog, my pretty Bijou, is ill, — so ill that I fear he will die. Poor creature! how oppressed he is, — how he moans, licks my hands,

and seems to say, "Help me"! I don't know what to do for him. He takes nothing but a few drops of gum syrup, which he licks off my fingers; this is how I feed him, half sugar, half caresses. Alas! what is the use of one's fondness? I shall not save him. This would make me cry, if I did not repress my tears. It is foolish to weep for an animal, but the heart has often neither wisdom nor dignity. And then my Bijou is so pretty, so good-natured, so graceful, so precious, coming from Lili. A dog is such a cheering, caressing, tender thing, — so completely one's own! I do believe I shall shed tears over him, but it shall be in my little room, the scene of all my secrets.

One of my friends once asked me to pray for her sick dog; I laughed at her and considered her devotion unbecoming. To-day I should do as she did; I no longer find such a prayer incongruous, so much does the heart influence the mind. I was not fond of Bijou then; now my conscience is not offended at the idea of appealing to God for the preservation of an animal. Is there anything unworthy in any creature of His, and may we not ask Him for the life of all those we love? I am inclined to believe this, and that, with the exception of evil, we may request everything from God, from the *good God*. This

familiar, this popular name of the Deity inspires me with boundless confidence. What a difference between it and the Supreme Being, as great as between Rose Drouille and Voltaire! But what would be the use of a philosophic faith when one was unhappy? What could we expect from an inaccessible being, so far, so far from man, that, while adoring, one cannot love Him? and yet the heart needs to love what it adores, and to adore what it loves, — which is why God made Himself flesh when He dwelt among us. It is from this infinite condescension that we derive our confiding faith. If you only knew all that one asks and sometimes obtains! Miracles prove this. I believe in miracles of healing, and in many others well authenticated, like those of which Saint Augustine and Bossuet speak, or those which take place in our own day. I must now return to my poor Bijou, who has certainly led me far.

1*st of July*. — My poor little dog is dead. I am sad and have no inclination to write.

2*nd*. — I have just had Bijou put into the box-bordered inclosure, amongst flowers and birds. I shall plant a rose-tree there, and call it *the dog-rose*. I have kept the two little front paws, so often laid on my hand, my feet, my knees. How pretty his attitudes were, whether caressing or

at rest! Every morning he used to come to the foot of my bed to kiss my feet as I rose; then he would go and do the same to Papa. We were his two favourites. All this comes back to me now; the past melts the heart. Papa regrets him as much as I. He said he would have given ten sheep for this dear pretty little dog. Alas! everything must leave us, or we leave everything.

A letter has just come which occasions me a very different distress. The heart's affections are as varied as their objects. How unlike my sorrow for Bijou to that I feel about a soul that is losing itself, or that at least is in danger! Oh, my God, how this pierces and terrifies one from the point of view of faith!

6th. — Always blanks; hindrances to writing. For three days I have hardly put down my needle. First of all, there was a child's frock that we were making, — a pretty little pink frock, that I stitched with pretty thoughts. Childhood and its attire are so sweet! Such pretty curls will fall over that little body; such white round arms will fill those sleeves, such dainty little hands peep out of them; and the child herself is so pretty, and called Angela besides! I thoroughly enjoyed working for her.

But to-day, mending up old linen wearied

me ; neither heart nor mind was in my work ; I kept thinking gloomily of thee. Alas ! we have received your letter of bad tidings ! The long-expected ship only brings disappointments, sadness. Caro must be much put out, much distressed, at seeing your union thus rendered doubtful. Who knows whether you will have enough to marry her ? This question involves your whole future ; accordingly Papa has weighed it deliberately. You will hear his opinion in his letter. This is only from me to thee. You cannot think how much this uncertainty, this suspense about your destiny, occupies me, — I will not say overwhelms, for I trust in Providence. How have I offered up to God all my happiness in exchange for thine ! If my prayer were but heard ; if some day thou wert to tell me, " I am content ! " I thrill at the idea of this happiness that I might witness ; and even if I did not ! . . .

7th. — I have done nothing but hear mass this morning, and write the whole day almost, to thee, to Raynaud, and to Caroline. How many thoughts have flowed from my heart, and how full it is still ! I am so occupied with your future ! I have done nothing but see you, hear you, all night — all of you unhappy, and groaning over your broken-off engagement. I trust

it will not come to this. Caroline and her aunt wrote to us yesterday, but nothing good or hopeful. Their letters are full of reverses, and nothing else. How all this distresses us, if you only knew it, my friend! I wrote to thee to-day, and am now putting down what it is very useless to put down here. When you read this Journal, all will be decided. Will it be happiness or unhappiness? God knows. Nothing human looks encouraging.

9th. — The first day of harvest. Nothing in the country is so charming as those fields of ripe corn, with their exquisite gilding. If the wind blow ever so gently, the ears, rippling one over the other, make the effect of waves; the great field to the north is a golden ocean. Papa may be seen at every moment looking out of the hall-window, contemplating his beautiful crops — sweet joy this of the agriculturist.

10th. — Spun my distaff full, and read a sermon of Bossuet's. We have the continuation; but thou art not there to help me to discover the beautiful passages. I have therefore got to gather all I can unaided. If you were to write to me, if I were less anxious about you, I should do everything with more pleasure; a heart-grief is a leaven which makes everything rise sour — turn bitter, as it were. So with my

life, since you have taken to torment it: oh, how I wish I were freed from it! how often I say to God, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" Yes, my friend, I put it away, and take it up again; I see thee sometimes happy, sometimes unhappy; I wish, and do not wish, thy marriage. The will of the Lord be done! our human will must lose itself in this; else there is no repose, nor light, nor security. Lucy, my goddaughter, who has none of these cares, is there waiting for her lesson.

That over, a passage of the Sermon *on Honour* that I have been reading occurs to my mind, and I will jot it down here; it relates to human vanity, and all belonging to it. "Ten times a count, ten times a lord, possessor of so much wealth, master of so many persons, minister of so many councils, and so on; nevertheless, let him multiply himself as he will, one single death is sufficient to lay him low. But this he thinks not of; and in that infinite aggrandizement that our vanity pictures to itself, it never occurs to him to measure himself by his coffin, which is yet the only correct standard." What a man! referring everything to the tomb! No one has been able to render death so striking and solemn as Bossuet! he crushes you to earth.

I am going to join Papa in the hall. I have been writing to the chirp of young chickens, who are pecking the grass below my window, and to the joyous voices of the reapers in the hemp-fields. Happy people, singing in the sweat of their brow !

11*th.* — The exquisite things that are to be seen in the fields, that I have just seen ! A fine field of corn, full of reapers and sheaves ; and of these sheaves one only standing, and shading two little children, and their grandmother giving them their breakfast of milk.

12*th.* — What shall we have on this page to-day ? Nothing has happened but the grasshoppers' chirp. We will wait till evening.

Evening, at twilight. I write with a cool hand, having just returned from washing my gown in the brook. It is pleasant to wash there, to watch the passing-by of fish, wavelets, blades of grass, leaves, scattered flowers ; to follow all that, and I know not what besides, down the current. So many things occur to the washerwoman who knows how to read the secrets of the brook. It is the bath of little birds, the mirror of heaven, the image of life, a *running road*, the font of baptism !

16*th.* — At length comes a little calm, a little hope of thy marriage. Mlle. M. informs us of

facts that will decide it. I see good prospects, a pretty fair beginning of life ; this makes us all happy. No one at the Cayla but has been sad for the last three weeks. The suffering of one member is felt by the whole body. How different my heart feels ! I have got rid of a nameless bitterness, that spoiled all my pleasure in thinking or speaking of thee. I have had ample occasion to observe how a name, spoken or thought, may bring sadness or joy. A cricket is chirping in the hall ; to-day there is a degree of cheerfulness everywhere. I must now write to Antoinette. Mimi has charged me to inform her of the arrival of Philibert's widow. Poor cousin from the Isle of France! she has come to seek refuge with her relations. Her son is to be sent to thee. Methinks his father is with him, and recommends him to our care. I shall soon write to thee respecting this dear little child.

Do not suppose that it is as amusing to write to a grand vicar as in my little book, or to Louise, to Caro, to my friends, when letters of affection come all ready-made from the heart. But that other had to be concocted ; and nothing is so wearisome as that mental effort, as a clear and concise statement of facts, — nothing ever gave me such trouble. I can only write

when I don't know what I am going to say; something comes and inspires me; the pen marks it down, and that is all. But parish matters are not to be dealt with thus. However, it is done in spite of myself. This shows one that good will and patience can get over anything. And then I have saved Papa a fatiguing task; it was about matters of business between Alos and Andillac.

By way of relaxation I have just been resting my head on a sheaf of corn down yonder in the field of Délarue, at Sept-Ponts, amongst shepherds and cows, little Estève prattling away. He was talking to me about his alphabet, — for he goes to school, and fancies himself the cleverest child there. *Lous layssé toutés darre!*[1] Simple pride of six years old, which is too sure to grow. The boy is, in fact, very superior to the others; but what will become of this ill-directed intelligence? It is the way of developing him which makes the man. How many great villains have had the elements of great heroes in them! Poor little Toinou, who will become a naughty boy! If I could, I would take him away from his father.

20*th*. — A mingled life, — *Martha* and *Mary*. After mass, which I heard, this being the

[1] I leave them all behind.

anniversary of our grandmother's death, I set myself down to sewing some kitchen aprons, and mending Erembert's trousers; all this blent with reading of different kinds, — history and poetry, — that Greek poetry of André Chenier, whose 'Beggar' and 'Sick Man' I like. —— Caroline's nosegays come! I hear this from the hall, and fly thither.

They are charming, — our nosegays for the Virgin. Sweet Caro! how I wish I had her there to embrace! Letters from Marie, Gabrielle, and M. Périaux at the same time! How many events for a Cayla day! Accordingly, my heart is full, quite full, of flowers, endearments, and of pious feelings, for that good Normandy curé, who speaks to me in so religiously kind a way. But he speaks to me, too, of Lili, and there comes death to overshadow my little joys! Now, I am thinking of that poor cousin, who, however, is in heaven, as M. Périaux tells me we may hope. He ought to know, — he who was her director, who was intimately acquainted with that intelligent lily.

21*st*. — A long letter to Euphrasie; this was my first pleasure this morning; now let us go and wait for others in the hall. What will occur to-day? One does not know, but one hopes; our very ignorance as to happiness constitutes

its charm: this is so true that God has made Paradise a mystery to us. Those who want to understand everything do not know how to be happy.

What has occurred? Nothing but the sound of flails falling in cadence on the threshing-floor; which cadence, blent with the crowing of cocks and chirping of grasshoppers, has an intense rusticity about it that I like.

22*nd*. — Oh, joy, joy! A letter from Raynaud deciding thy marriage, asking Papa to let me come to the wedding. I shall not, I fear, be able to witness the auspicious day; but provided it comes, provided I know of your happiness, though at a distance, I am content, — I bless God with my whole heart. I shall not forget that it was on Saint Magdalen's day that this hope rose in me; how sweet it is after the bitterness past! Maurice, dear brother, how I feel that I am thy sister at this moment, and for ever! This said, my little book goes its way with the desk under the table, and I to —— to-morrow morning. I should much like to take it with me; but where could I keep it down yonder? I shall take notes in my heart, and then put them down here. Adieu for the present, Maurice and paper both. What a pity to leave you!

[30*th*]. — Here I am again, after a space of eight days, after a fall, after death having clutched me, and let me go as God willed. Oh, it is indeed God who has saved me! who wills that I should remain yet a while on earth, here, beside Papa; in my little room just now, that I may write to thee and many others; that I may make of my life — I know not what that is good, gentle, useful, so far as lies in my power. I told thee of my adventure in my letter of this morning; and now I want to tell thee my delight at being able to come at length to Paris; no, not to Paris, — to thy wedding: it is that I am coming to see, — that which takes precedence in my heart.

What a man Victor Hugo is! I have just been reading some of him: he is divine, infernal, wise, mad; he is the people, the king; he is man, woman, painter, poet, sculptor; he is everything; he has seen all, done all, felt all; he amazes, repels, and enchants me! and yet I hardly know him, except in 'Cromwell,' some prefaces, 'Marie Tudor,' and a little of 'Notre Dame.' I shall go and see this Notre Dame in Paris. How many things to be seen for me when I emerge from my desert!

The 8*th* (*August*). — Françoise, the sister of M. Limer, is come to see me in my solitude, which

is more than ever solitary since Mimi is not here ; she is at Gaillac, the dear sister ! Meanwhile, awaiting her return, I am charmed that Françoise should have come to fill up the blank somewhat ; she used, you know, to be our Sunday companion, — so kind, lively, and gay ! I find her somewhat changed. Time ! oh, Time ! She left us two years ago ; since then she has lost her brother, who was drowned, and a cousin, a tall, handsome young man, whom she had to see reduced to nothing, consumed by suffering, and whom for three months she watched night and day. Poor, good girl ! this is what has aged her. Now she is going to offer her life to a convent, — her tried, disenchanted life, — without pleasure in the world. It is thus that women console themselves, happy, very happy, in that God has provided for them happiness in Himself. I have just been writing her a long letter about her affairs. Thus it happens, that, in occupying myself about these retreats for others, I return to thinking of them, to saying to myself that they will go God-wards, and I into the world, as Saint Bernard's little brother used to say to his brothers setting out for Citeaux. Already a good number of my acquaintance have gone off in this direction. And now I am going to write down, in order

not to forget it, an inspiration of night that I have approved by day.

In entering my little room this evening, at ten o'clock, I am met by the white light of the moon, which rises round and full, behind a group of oaks, at the Mérix; there she is, higher, higher, ever higher, each time I look up. She travels faster over the sky than my pen over this paper; but I can follow her with my eyes, — wondrous faculty of *seeing*, so elevated, extended, and enrapturing. We may enjoy the heavens whenever we will; even at night from my bed I perceive through a chink in the shutter a little star that frames itself there about eleven o'clock, and shines on me long enough for me to fall asleep before it passes on; hence I call it the star of sleep, and love it. Shall I be able to see it in Paris? I fancy my days and nights will be changed, and I cannot think of this without regret. To take me hence is to drag Paula out of her grotto; it must be for thee that I leave my desert. — thee for whom, God knows, I would go to the end of the world. Farewell to the moonshine, the cricket's chirp, the *glouglou* of the brook. I had the nightingale in addition a short time ago; but some charm is ever wanting to our charming things. And now, nothing but God, prayer, and sleep!

9th. — Could you guess what is now causing me positive suffering? It is thinking of that little queen, Jane Grey, beheaded when so young, so sweet, so charming.

10th. — A companion in my little room, a partridge wounded in the wing, but still very agile, lively, and graceful. It glides like a rat into every corner of its prison, and is getting tame, accustoming itself to see me, — so that now it will eat and drink beside me. I should like to take it to Charles.

A slight indisposition made me throw myself on thy bed, — that bed where you lay for six months in the fever; where I saw thee so pale, exhausted, dying, as it seemed; whence the good God miraculously raised thee up. All this went with me to bed: I saw, re-saw, thought, gave thanks, and then fell into a doze, and dreamed of being alone in a desert, between a serpent and a lion; fright woke me. I had never seen any other lion than that; but it was one most assuredly. How do we contrive thus to create in our sleep, — we who cannot produce an atom? Is it some reflex of divine power which then passes into our souls? I am going to bed, after a letter written to, and two received from, Louise, my poor Louise, so loving, so lovable, and sad, since her father's death. "I am not one of

those who easily console themselves. The more I weep the more I want to weep; but I blend you with my tears." Dear Louise! Mimi; too, writes me word from Gaillac that she has seen the picture; that the child Jesus is very good indeed. but that the Virgin's eyes are considered strange, and her colour too high. People do not remember that it is intended for a lofty and dark position.

12*th*. — Oh, the Virgin! the Virgin! There she is in the dining-room, exhibited on the sideboard; the whole house is there, — Jean, Jeannot, Paul, the Shepherd, and other worshippers like those of Bethlehem, — and the child Jesus is smiling at them, divinely resting on His mother's bosom. Oh, He is beautiful, the infant Jesus; delicate, lovely, celestial! I delight in looking at Him, now near, now from a distance, in all positions and under all lights. I do not think, though, that this painting ought to be exposed to the broad daylight of a room; these holy figures are made for the mysterious light of a church.

13*th*. — Joy upon joy! another letter from Caroline. More kindness; all sorts of love to Papa, Eran, Mimi, and all; a box of things for us. Good, good, good sister that she is! may God return her in blessings all that she does

for us, — all that I feel in my heart towards her! My friend, how I shall love this charming sister! how I do love her! how I long to hold her in my arms!

14*th*. — Only one word, because I am tired; because I ought to sleep, and should not sleep if I were to write; and that body and soul are alike exhausted. Letters from Caroline, Louise, Irène, Mimi. My heart is full; good-night!

15*th*. — I thought I should have died last night: a faintness, a numbness, a palpitation of the heart roused me from my first sleep. I shook myself, ran to the window, the air, the fresh night, which restored me. This attack procured me a moment's enjoyment of the beautiful sky, the beautiful stars that I had been on the point of going to see up there; then I returned to my bed with serious thoughts of death, — that death which comes we know not when. Let us be ready.

16*th*. — What a pretty benediction this . . . (no ink).

17*th*. — Come! ink at length! I can write; ink! happiness and life. I was dead for three days that the circulation of this blood had been arrested; dead to my Journal, to thee, to intimacy. My friend, my heart is full of thee, of

Caro, of your happiness, of this box, these gowns, these bonnets trimmed with flowers, these white gloves, these little shoes, these open-work stockings, this embroidered petticoat. Oh, I have looked at, touched, worn, dressed my heart out in all these a hundred times since they came, an hour ago. Oh, kind, kind and charming sister; India had indeed a sweet treasure there, that God bestows on thee! What a genial nature! What pleasure in giving pleasure! Never was wedding present bestowed with more delight, or received with more gratitude; mine overflows my powers of expression; it is one of the things that God sees and knows. From Him, the giver of all good, I ask for her all blessings and eternal happiness. I shall take great delight in my pretty dresses, though dress, in general, gives me little pleasure; but in these there is something sweeter and more beautiful than mere outward appearance,—something more than vanity. They are the gift of thy betrothed; it is a sister's robe that she is giving me. I wrote to her the moment I had seen the things. My heart goes out towards her; I want her to know at once the pleasure she has given me, and gives us all, with her altar flowers, her tablecloth, her Virgin, her dresses, and so many beautiful, graceful things. How I love her! May God

bless her; God, who does not let a cup of cold water given remain without reward!

This is what came to us from Gaillac, with ink, a letter from Mimi, pepper and oil; this is telling thee everything. I may also add that Eran has killed a hare and a partridge, and has brought me back two quails alive and suffering. Whatever suffers belongs to me, and has always done so. As a child I used to take possession of all the lame chickens; to do good, to relieve, is such an intimate delight, — the very marrow of a woman's heart.

I end where I began, with that benediction of animals on the day of Saint Roch, so impressive, so religious a ceremony to those who discern in it God surrounding man with so many creatures consecrated to His service; true image of creation, this gathering of animals, of them all, even down to the pig. I kept thinking of Bijou, whom I should certainly have had blessed.

[*No date.*] — Yesterday, Sunday, spent the day in church, or on the road to it; and while walking thought of the Hermit, and the Angel counting his steps, — a story read in childhood, that remains in my memory, and returns to me in my solitary walks. In the Garenne-au-Buis to Sept-Fonts, where we have been together, I find myself again with that heavenly companion.

20*th*. — Mimi, Lucie, Amélie, her cousin, Fontenelles; all these, entering the hall at once, take me hence. I must go to the kitchen, the drawing-room, to little newly hatched chickens, which occupy me a good deal: this is more than enough to prevent my writing. I shut up my book in the cupboard.

Ten o'clock in the evening. — What I see is too pretty not to tell thee of; our young ladies are down there beside the brook, singing, laughing, revealing themselves now and then under the tree-tops, like night nymphs, lighted up by the flash of matches struck by Jeannot, their running lantern. They are out crab-fishing, Erembert wishing to give this pleasure to these young girls whom everything amuses. I preferred being here to watch their sport, and tell thee about it. I hear them laugh and laugh continually; that age is a permanent joy. As for me, I need rest, to go to bed, instead of wandering along the damp grass that borders a brook. Adieu, Maurice! we have talked much of thee while displaying the wedding presents. I would not leave thee if I could help it. One might well spend the night here in describing all that is to be seen and heard in my delectable little room, all that come to visit me in it, — small insects, black as night; little spotted, scalloped

moths, flying like maniacs about my lamp. There is one burning, another going, a third returning, and on the table something like a grain of dust is walking about. How many inhabitants in this small space! A word, a look, to each of these, — a question respecting their kindred, their way of life, their home, — would lead us into infinity; better to say my prayers here at the window before the Infinite of Heaven.

22*nd*. — Madame and Monsieur de Faramond, a letter from Louise, yesterday one from Antoinette, pleasure and happiness! To-morrow I set out with the young ladies. Adieu, my book! but perhaps I shall take it with me, that I may still find myself with thee.

Oh, these old castles, with their great halls, their antique furniture, their wide windows from whence one sees the whole sky, their portraits of lovely ladies and noble lords! There is an indescribable pleasure in looking about one here, in wandering from room to room. Oh, I delight in old castles, and for the last day or two I have been enjoying myself in one. I am writing to thee from Montels, in an out-of-the-way room, where, fortunately, I have found some ink; for I forgot to bring any with me, and it would have been a great privation to me not to have had the power of noting down any-

thing of what goes on within me in an abode so much to my taste. I enjoy it, too, all the more because there are childish associations linked with every turn; and you know how much pleasure that fact gives me. I was nine years old when I came to Montels before. On arriving now, I recognised the church beneath its tall elm-tree, where I used to go and jump about in the shade; then the great court-yard, and then the small one with its well, the glazed door of the saloon, and in it the grand, beautiful ladies I used to be so fond of looking at: one, by the side of a meditating Capuchin, presents a striking contrast, but this I had not remarked before as I do now. In childhood the effects of reflection make little impression. We go out, we run, we wander here and there in the woods, in superb avenues of chestnut-trees, in immense meadows. A charming country life, if we were not so much alone. There are only Madame de Paulo, her daughter, Louise de Thézac, and I here, with the addition of little Henri to amuse us. A child at all events makes a noise, and this the interior of an old castle requires; else come vague terrors, ghosts, magicians. There is more than one legend of the kind connected with this castle. Formerly a nun . . .

They took my inkstand away, which pre-

vented me writing down my ghost story; but here is a legend which is quite as good: —

THE MOUNTAINEER'S BALLAD.

Sing *De Profundis*, sisters dear,
The bell is ringing for my love;
She 's gone alone to heaven above,
And I am left to mourn her here.
Heaven is a better place, they say,
Than earth, that only yields us sorrow;
Ring, bell, for my beloved to-day,
Thou 'lt ring for me to-morrow.

I saw a fiery meteor dart;
My shepherdess, oh, was that thee?
Canst thou be sentenced where thou art
To suffer on account of me?
I saw at evening on the heath,
The rainbow's quivering light beneath,
Dancing before me here and there,
A fairy form as light as air.

Methought I knew my Rose again.
Alas! if she had then to pay
By agonies of fiery pain
For the brief raptures of a day!
Ring for my love, ring, holy bell;
Open for her the heavenly way;
Call, call on all to come and pray
Who knew my Rose and loved her well,
And to release me from my sorrow,
Bell, ring for me to-morrow.

I had not thus survived thee, dear,
  Nor borne my bitter grief a day,
If thou hadst left a mother here,
  After thy death for thee to pray.
But soon as from the earth set free
  Thy soul shall wing its upward flight,
Soon as Saint Peter opes to thee
  His golden gate, his realms of light,
Then "Come to prayer," the bell, I ween,
  Once more to passers-by shall say,
"It was for Rose you prayed yestreen;
  Pray for her lover's soul to-day."

He said, and soon his last hour came
  And set him free from sorrow;
While, sadly calling on his name,
I heard his mother say the same, —
  "Bell, ring for me to-morrow."

Charles, Charles arriving fom Paris! Everybody is running to meet him. I shall have tidings of thee. No letter; you are very cruel not to write to me, — to me who write to you from everywhere.

30*th*. — News, letters: Mimi and Papa have written to me and my friend De Maistre; Etienne bringing all this, and carrying me off with him to Rayssac. Dear Louise will be surprised and rejoiced to see me.

4*th September*. — At Rayssac for four days amidst all the delights of friendship and moun-

tains. Talking with Louise and walking to and fro have so taken up all my time that I have written nothing for thee. I have only answered Marie's letter, — that other friend who makes me find another Rayssac at the Coques. I find a good deal of similarity between Louise and Marie; they have the same ardent and lofty character, the same devotedness, the same high and powerful intellect, the same affection for me. To be beloved by two such — whence comes this happiness to me?

A walk, a pilgrimage, half-riding, half-walking to St. Jean de Jeanne, a little church hidden under the hills, like one of the cells of Lebanon. We found in it a pretty statue of the Virgin, and a picture of Saint John full of nature and expression. It is not often that one meets with such good execution in country places. Here the homes are poor and the churches rich; faith enables this eminently believing population to understand how much better it is to adorn the house of God than that of man, the eternal dwelling than the dwellings of a day. In these mountains and valleys, where imagination so delights itself, I have found heart-memories as well, paths which you traversed three or four years ago. How many steps taken since then!

5*th*. — Don't write at night if you want to be read. This morning I discovered how I had been scribbling yesterday evening; but between us everything is excusable. You will forgive me my bad writing, as I do you for not writing to me, — a far worse thing in my opinion. In reading a 'Picturesque France' I have found out that the Nivernais was inhabited in the time of Cæsar by the Vadicassians and the Rogii; that the inhabitants of the Nievre are hospitable; that amidst its antiquities have been observed a web-footed statue of a queen, and in a marble quarry at Clamecy a woman's hand, with its bones turned to turquoise. Then, again, there is the poet, Adam Billaut, of Nevers. Here I am encamped in Marie's country, and shall be able to speak about it to her first. It is for this reason that I have taken notes. Always some heart interest in what one does and says.

But for Louise, who came and lighted on this page like a butterfly on a flower, I should have gone on writing I know not what; but it would not have been worth my conversation with my friend, those confidential matters whispered from heart to heart, which are so precious to friendship. It is of thee I am thinking now; of thee, suffering, pallid, dying, consumed with fever,

and cured, raised up this very day, the 8th of September, as if by a miracle, a true miracle of healing, the anniversary of which I am going to church to bless over again.

A pitiable incident occurred: a poor madwoman came like a whirlwind into the church, flinging herself upon her knees before the tabernacle, and then singing a hymn to the Blessed Sacrament. It was touching to witness, this holy frenzy, this delirious devotion to God, the poor maniac's only love. At all events she will one day be happy, when in heaven her reason returns, and shows her that the height of wisdom is to love what she loved unwisely. Many other lunatics will be less well off. This subject would carry me a long way. I must now go and make acquaintance with Madame de Bayne and her suite, who have just arrived from Toulouse.

She is a sweet, good, little woman, but silent and timid, leaving one to guess at qualities of heart and head, and many agreeable accomplishments. She paints, draws, plays, embroiders a good deal, and can thus give a charm to the rusticity of mountain life, — a new abode for her, and rather an unfamiliar one, — out of the world into the desert, — if she had not something wherewith to smooth the abrupt transition.

At least these are the reflections which occur to me about the position of this young creature, coming as it were from the Court; for she has just arrived from Austria, where she was with the princes, whom M. de Monthel now never leaves. This contrast of the past and present has struck me a good deal.

Louise tells me that I can find much to say where others could see nothing at all. "Look," she said; "you could say a hundred things about this" — the latch of the door that she was lifting in going away. Assuredly one would have a good deal to say and think about that bit of iron that so many hands have touched, which has been raised with so many different emotions, under so many glances, so many men, days, and years. Oh, the history of a latch would be a long one indeed!

I go away to-morrow. Poor Louise, what regrets just now! The end of everything is grief. It was all joy a week ago, and yet not all joy either, for a mourning thought blent with it; every moment we thought and spoke of her poor father. I missed him much at Rayssac, that kind Monsieur de Bayne, who was so good and gentle a converser. I approached the house as if it were a cemetery, with sadness and regret. But company, excursions, walks,

diverted me. The hues of the soul are fluctuating, and efface each other like those of the sky.

12*th*. — At seven o'clock this morning I embraced her and left her weeping in her bed. How much affection there was in that adieu, that pressure of the hand, that *Come back*, that extinction of the voice that tears bring on! Poor dear Louise! I had the courage to leave her and not to weep at all. I don't in any way understand myself; this self, that I look upon as too hard, does not give way on these occasions. But, never mind; I can love as well as others, and what comes from the heart is as much worth as what flows from the eyelids. But this tender Louise both loves and weeps. The fact is, she did regret me very much, because she needs a friend, and used to tell me of her griefs, her future, her plans, perhaps her illusions. Women always have some.

[*No date.*] — Visitors, sporting sounds at the Cayla, and I, working with Euphrasie in the embrasure of one of the hall-windows. I am very fond of thus sitting apart, of hearing talk going on at a little distance, and of saying a word or two from time to time that connects one with it. I am so much taken up with my little travelling "trousseau," that there is no possibility of

writing or reading. But then, again, I am coming to Paris in a fortnight.

19*th*.—There has arrived at Cayla to-day a very interesting young creature, full of charms, memories, and misfortunes, — the youngest daughter of our Isle of France cousin. I cannot look at her without deep emotion, she awakens in me so much affection and regret. I think of her poor father, who was so lovable, so superior, so fond of me, his daughter says. Poor, dear little thing, how taking she is with her vivacity and cleverness, her graces of fourteen, and something foreign in her face and accent which adds a charm to her charms! Her little brother, too, is very nice, and quite happy at his college. He is only nine years old, and already feels the value of education. Both are ignorant as Creoles. "Yonder," they say, "we did nothing but play, but in France we must learn many things; otherwise we should be laughed at." My cousin during his life used to send them to school; since his death his wife has taken them away, no doubt from want of funds. But now they find all they want in France, with their Lagardelle relations and their father's brothers. Thus Providence comes to the aid of us all.

Oh, I too am a proof of this; I, who shall be able to take this journey, this delightful journey

to Paris. I have told thee how it has been managed. Should we have expected last year to come to this? God be praised and blessed! Papa has just been to Andillac, to get my passport *visé'd* by the Mayor; a sign that we are going to meet. Writing to Marie of Gaillac, Marie of the Coques, and here, a little chatting and walking with Félicité, has made up my day. Adieu! there have been less happy ones in our lives. This time last year we had thee so ill!

24th. — No writing, no retiring hither for many days past; company, company, the whole county to receive! We were twelve at table to-day, to-morrow we shall be fifteen; autumnal visitors, ladies and sportsmen, and a sprinkling of curés among them, as if to bless the crowd, — in short, the castle-life of the good old times. It would be pleasant enough without the fuss of housekeeping that it entails. Ah! and then I have had, too, the expected visit of the Rayssac Paladin, who came as ambassador extraordinary to bring me a letter and happy tidings, a beginning of hope, the consent of some one of great influence in this affair. This has made me very glad, for my friend's sake and for his. I do not know which interests me most; both amiable, high-principled, good, and noble-hearted, and both united in their confidence in me. Oh,

if it were not so late, how many things I would tell thee concerning the two days of this mysterious visit, — of walks, of words sown in the woods beneath the vine-leaves!

28th. — Nothing, nothing since that day, not a word of writing, nor any means of saying what has been done, seen, and said at the Cayla and in me. How many persons and things, visits, laughs, games, adieus, prosperous journeys wished to me, who am about to set out! One day we were twelve at table, the next fifteen; guests dropped in from here and there. One would have said that people in all directions had pre-arranged a descent in large flights upon Cayla. A great party in the great hall; it was all in keeping, and wild merriment resulted from so much youth. A good number of guests went away this evening, taking with them the young Creole, the one I was most sorry to see go away. I love her, and know not when I shall see her again. The mountain messenger left us early in the morning, promising me, as a means of communication, a letter from his sister, in which he was to put a sign if he was hopeful of happiness; if not, nothing. I am afraid of that nothing.

Evening. — I have come in from the Cabanas; Erembert from Gaillac, bringing me the

expected letter. No sign! Poor young man, poor friend! They will be very unhappy. Caroline and you have written to us too. This is enough to occupy heart and pen; but I have not a moment to myself. There is a sweet joy for me conveyed from thee in thy letter to Papa. Oh, God always ends by granting our requests! Dear little room! I must leave thee for this evening, and soon for a long time.

29th. — Farewell, my little room; farewell, my Cayla; farewell, my book, although, indeed, I take it with me, but it will travel in my trunk.

I have just returned from a mass that the kind pastor has said for my prosperous journey. I have received all the good-byes and hand-shaking of Andillac.[1]

[1] This seventh book ends the 29th of September, 1838, when Mademoiselle E. de Guérin was leaving the Cayla to attend her brother Maurice's wedding. The eighth, which we have already printed ('Reliquiæ,' Caen, 1855), was begun at Nevers, the 10th of April, 1839. We shall see further on that in this interval Mademoiselle E. de Guérin, to please Maurice, had also kept a journal of the five months they spent together in Paris; but this book, as well as the first of the series, has eluded our most careful search.

END OF VOL. I.

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